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Chairman: Mr. KUKAN (Slovakia)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 109: SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE WORLD SOCIAL SITUATION AND TO YOUTH, AGEING, DISABLED PERSONS AND THE FAMILY (A/48/3 (chap. VII D); A/48/24, A/48/56-E/1993/6, A/48/207, A/48/289, A/48/291, A/48/293, A/48/462, A/48/476, A/48/484; E/1993/50/Rev.1; A/C.3/48/L.2, L.3, L.4) (continued)

1. Ms. HASSANI (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that in many countries the social situation was deteriorating while in others wealth was increasing. The lack of minimum living standards in the developing countries posed a threat to the whole international community. The Report on the World Social Situation (E/1993/50) demonstrated that social problems could only be solved by addressing the issues of economic development and unfair international economic relations. The realization of social development depended primarily on the degree to which poverty was eradicated.

2. The international community, including the United Nations, should work to promote respect for the most fundamental of human rights, the right to life and to minimum standards of living and spiritual welfare. The Preparatory Committee for the World Summit for Social Development should base its work on proposals for principles and action-oriented programmes aimed at remedying underdevelopment. The strategies proposed by the Commission on Sustainable Development for social integration, the reduction of poverty and the generation of productive employment, as well as the results of the high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council, should serve as a frame of reference for the preparatory process. National committees and non-governmental organizations should engage in a critical analysis of the various past failures, including those in implementing the United Nations Decades for Development, the Declaration on Social Progress and Development and the Declaration on the Right to Development. Recommendations could then be drafted for incorporation in the draft declaration and plan of action to be presented by the Preparatory Committee for the World Summit for Social Development.

3. The preparations for the tenth anniversary of "International Youth Year: Participation, Development, Peace", which would be celebrated in 1995, offered an opportunity to safeguard and promote the role of young people in economic progress and development. The Islamic Republic of Iran had accordingly established a Supreme Council for Youth consisting of five specialized commissions dealing with education and training, leisure time, employment, marriage and social and political issues. As part of an effort for international and regional cooperation, the first International Youth Friendship Jamboree had been held at Tehran in the summer of 1993, with the participation of the States of the region and 13 member States of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO).

4. The Islamic Republic of Iran had expanded its services for the rehabilitation, protection and assistance of the disabled. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs had set up a special Bureau of Support for the Employment of "Janbazan" (war disabled) and Ordinary Disabled, which was concerned with vocational training and reintegration. At least 10 per cent of the manpower employed in Iranian government service was war disabled and 3 per cent ordinary disabled.

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5. The United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons had made the international community aware of the needs and problems of the disabled. As part of their national development programmes, countries had begun to take steps to improve the position of the disabled, ensure their full participation in society and promote equality of opportunity.

6. She stressed the importance of the International Year of the Family, to be held in 1994, for solving problems concerning the family. The outcomes and recommendations of the four preparatory meetings, held in Tunisia, China, Malta and Colombia, should help in that, as should the International Conference on Population and Development, to be held in Cairo in 1994, and the World Conference on Women, planned for 1995. In the belief that population growth was the most important factor in social and economic backwardness and increased poverty, and that protection of the environment, economic development and control of population growth were key elements in promoting better living standards at the national, regional and international levels, the Islamic Republic of Iran had organized a regional conference on family planning at Tehran, on 11 September 1993, the results of which would be submitted to the International Conference on Population.

7. In regard to ageing, she proposed that the problems of the elderly should be approached through educational programmes at universities and campaigns in the media. Young people should be made aware of the problem, funds should be invested in cultural activities for the elderly, the activities of organizations working with the elderly should be coordinated and integrated and the elderly should receive financial support and social services. The establishment of communication at the international level among organizations concerned with questions of ageing, the promotion of cooperation among experts, the development of scientific associations, and conferences and seminars at local and international levels, would help to improve the lot of the elderly. Her delegation stressed the importance in that connection of the Proclamation on Ageing. She believed that poverty could be overcome and the social situation improved through global mobilization, popular participation and political commitment. She hoped that the World Summit for Social Development would act as a catalyst.

8. Ms. VISANU (Romania) welcomed the United Nations continuing interest in social questions even as it was engaged in reform and restructuring. As she saw it, the restructuring process would have limited impact on the issues of social development and social equity. To lay the basis for sustained social development, not only would the Third Committee and other United Nations bodies have to gird themselves for the task and Governments take action at the national level, but above all, there would need to be a kind of psychological conversion on a global scale that could only come about through education. She stressed that, though she was far from underestimating the importance of the other factors, it was necessary first of all to raise world-wide public awareness of the needs of the disadvantaged, with education as the first step in planning ahead.

9. Although there was no short-term solution to social problems, the efforts made in the field of education were beginning to bear fruit. Fundamental values were moving forward: social justice, the emancipation of women, training for young people that guaranteed them full employment, family values, and concern

(Ms. Visanu, Romania)

for the elderly. In a national context marked by social problems, for the most part inherited from the former totalitarian regime, her delegation stressed the important role of education in enhancing social integration, particularly of disadvantaged and marginalized groups. Education was the bridge between an outstanding past achievement, the World Summit for Children, held in New York in 1990, and one that was to come, the World Summit for Social Development which, together with the International Year of the Family to be celebrated in 1994, would constitute one of Romania's prime goals.

10. Her delegation believed that poverty and social exclusion were problems whose severity made them a threat to democratic principles and values. She questioned the tendency to evaluate the political determination of the young democracies of Central and Eastern Europe to promote the mechanisms of the market economy in their countries by the magnitude of the social costs entailed by the reform process. The Romanian Government recognized that its determination to limit the social cost of those reforms was compounding the country's difficulties. The future would tell whether it was right to be concerned about the social consequences of its programmes of political and economic reform.

11. Mr. AGGREY (Ghana) recalled that in 1969 the United Nations had adopted the Declaration on Social Progress and Development, spelling out activities and programmes aimed at solving the most pressing social problems afflicting all countries irrespective of their level of development.

12. Various factors, (acute poverty, drought, food insecurity, environmental degradation, social strife, harsh structural adjustment measures, falling commodity prices and rising external debt) hampered the developing countries' ability to tackle those problems. Caught in a vicious circle, they had to borrow to finance their education, health and sanitation policies while a large amount of their paltry earnings were siphoned off to service their debts. That socio-economic insecurity created social tension and fostered intolerance and communal strife which, when they spilled over national borders, threatened international peace and security. In the end, human beings, far from benefiting from economic development, were victims of the social strife that resulted.

13. In view of its belief that economic growth should not be at the expense of social development and equity, his delegation had welcomed with satisfaction the Vienna Declaration, particularly its article 10, reaffirming the right to development as a universal and inalienable right and an integral part of fundamental human rights. It hoped that the international community would agree to alleviate the debt burden of the developing countries so that they would be able to free the resources needed to pursue their socio-economic and cultural goals.

14. The Organization had been entrusted under the Charter with the task of promoting social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom. In that respect, his delegation believed in an integrated approach to development where social and human development concerns were placed at the centre, and he welcomed the proposal to convene a World Summit on Social Development in Denmark in 1995 on the three major issues set forth in General Assembly resolution 47/92, namely, alleviation of poverty, expansion of productive employment and

(Mr. Aggrey, Ghana)

social integration. His delegation believed that national efforts, fortified by international cooperation, would advance the cause of social progress which had hitherto been regarded only as a byproduct of economic growth.

15. The Secretary-General, in his report on policies and programmes involving youth (A/47/349), had listed some of the problems faced by today's youth (unemployment and underemployment, teenage pregnancies, high rate of school drop-outs, drug and alcohol abuse, malnutrition and other threats to their health and well being). The logical conclusion was that the objectives of the International Youth Year were far from realization, and that the Organization therefore needed to revitalize its programmes for youth.

16. Ghana, for its part, had fashioned out programmes to inculcate in youth the virtues of love and dedication to duty, to create awareness in them about social evils that hampered their well being and to keep them as committed participants in the overall development effort of the country. His delegation hoped that the tenth anniversary of the International Youth Year would offer an opportunity to develop action-oriented programmes towards the year 2000 and beyond, and thus to finally achieve the objectives and meet the new needs of youth.

17. Since older people did not tend to threaten society, ageing was not usually perceived as a priority issue demanding international action, and policies and programmes in that area were woefully limited. In Ghana, ageing was not regarded merely as the last stage in the process of dying. Thanks to the solidarity that characterized the extended family system, the aged were guaranteed pride of place in society as repositories of wisdom and knowledge and as the fulcrum of social equilibrium. It was in that light that his delegation appreciated General Assembly resolution 47/5, proclaiming 1999 as the International Year of Older Persons, in recognition of humanity's demographic coming of age and the promise it held for maturing attitudes and capabilities in social, economic, cultural and spiritual undertakings to achieve global peace and development.

18. On the issue of disabled persons, his delegation was saddened by the fact that over 500 million people all over the world were disabled, that 80 per cent of them lived in developing countries, that only 1 per cent of that group had access to basic health care and, what was worse, that about two thirds of the afflicted were women and children. It was to be hoped that the four plenary meetings of the General Assembly devoted to marking the conclusion of the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons would have raised awareness aimed at prevention, rehabilitation and equality of opportunities for the disabled. Ghana hoped that the question would be placed on the agenda of the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development as well as on the agenda of the 1995 World Summit for Social Development.

19. His delegation noted with satisfaction the arrangements that had been made for the International Year of the Family (1994), an initiative that was all the more commendable because the family was the foundation block on which society was built, formed the basis of all societal arrangements, and contributed to stability and development in the civil polity.

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(Mr. Aggrey, Ghana)

20. In conclusion, he stressed that no matter how laudable national efforts might be, they would not achieve much without the support of the international community and the abiding weight of the United Nations.

21. Mr. WAN JUNAIDI Tuanku Jaafar (Malaysia) reviewed the mandate of the United Nations in the area of social development and stressed that social development, which involved considerable investment in human resources, physical infrastructure and natural resources, thrived best in an atmosphere which stimulated sustained and rapid economic growth. It could be enhanced by suitable policies. The development of any country depended on the productivity and quality of its population. Hence the importance of the family, which was the basic institution of society. The family institution would have to be strengthened in order to make it possible to address emerging social problems such as drug addiction, juvenile delinquency, alcoholism, child neglect and abuse, destitution and vagrancy. In the increasingly borderless world, the external environment played an equally important role.

22. Social development was intrinsically linked to the eradication of poverty, which still affected 1.3 billion people. Malnutrition, unemployment, violence and threats to the environment were still among the challenges confronting the international community. In the rich nations, a moral crisis was undermining the very fabric of society. The International Conference on Population and Development, to be held in Cairo in 1994, would provide useful input for the World Summit for Social Development. Malaysia was prepared to participate in the Cairo Conference, as well as in the preparatory process for the World Summit.

23. Malaysia fully endorsed the Final Declaration of the Vienna World Conference on Human Rights, particularly the provisions regarding the rights of the child and the disabled. The Government of Malaysia had taken measures to protect children from all forms of maltreatment, neglect, sexual exploitation and abuse, as well as from the trafficking in and use of narcotic and psychotropic substances, and to guarantee the education and development of orphans.

24. A country's youth were its main asset. The world's youth population was declining as a percentage of total population, and it was essential to provide youth with all the necessary conditions to ensure their future and enable them to make a useful contribution to development.

25. The Government of Malaysia had accepted the proclamation on the participation of the disabled adopted by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. During the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons, his Government had taken many steps to improve the quality of life of disabled persons.

26. The recommendations of the World Assembly on Ageing, held in Vienna in 1982, were particularly important because the proportion of elderly in the population was increasing rapidly, especially in the developing world. The elderly could be useful to society, but society must protect those who needed assistance. The Government of Malaysia was committed to strengthening the family system with a view to creating a caring society. His delegation therefore welcomed the proclamation of 1994 as the International Year of the

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Family and hoped that the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the issue (A/48/293) would be implemented.

27. Mr. HOOGERWERF (Netherlands), speaking as a representative of the young people in his country, put forward three propositions. First, in order to make the celebration of the tenth anniversary of the International Youth Year in 1995 really serve to enhance the position of young people, the draft world youth programme of action towards the year 2000 and beyond must emphasize structural measures. Secondly, the United Nations, the specialized agencies and Member States must give more prominence in their activities to the norms and values which formed the starting-point of the various United Nations conventions. Thirdly, education, the chief area of youth policy, must teach norms and values based on the principle of pluralism.

28. The International Youth Year was supposed to promote a special youth policy focusing on education and employment. Yet the assessment made in 1992 by the Secretary-General (A/47/349) and in the Report on the World Social Situation 1993 (E/1993/50) made one wonder if there was really cause for celebrating the tenth anniversary of the Year: primary education had become less accessible to children in the least developed countries, in many areas girls were still at a disadvantage compared to boys, and unemployment among young people was growing because of the world-wide economic recession, while drug and alcohol abuse and criminality were taking an increasing toll among them. The good intentions of the United Nations had not yet been translated into concrete action programmes developing the three basic themes of the International Youth Year, participation, development and peace, and there was the danger that the Year would arouse only a passing interest unless the celebrations to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations gave sufficient attention to youth policy. It was also a cause for concern that young people were still treated as a group apart rather than being integrated into social policy as agents and beneficiaries, and that they were not always involved in decision-making.

29. To avoid further deterioration of the situation of young people, new policy, in particular the draft world youth programme of action, must be based on an assessment of past policy.

30. The norms and values which formed the starting-point of the various United Nations conventions must be integrated into the activities of the United Nations, the specialized agencies and Member States in order to prompt new initiatives on behalf of young people. Norms and values were passed down from one generation to the next by the family and the school, but young people were also influenced by the mass media and leisure activities. There was always a discrepancy between their values and those of the previous generation, everywhere in the world. They might choose to conform to the old norms and values or to rebel against them, but apathy was the most common reaction in the Netherlands and perhaps in the rest of Europe and in the United States as well. The young justified their attitude by the inability of the current generation of politicians to deal with the economic recession, the threat to the environment and the post-cold-war ideological vacuum. Apathy, far removed from the ideals of solidarity, was, however, not universal, and many young people wished to be participants, as evidenced in a document on the contribution of non-governmental youth organizations to the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-First Century.

(Mr. Hoogerwerf, Netherlands)

31. Education must not be used to impose a single ideology on the young generation but must be based on pluralism, which was the interaction between cultures and generations. From that a new universal set of norms and values could emerge, based on human rights and the rights of the child.

32. If youth policy was to be effective, Member States must actively participate in the various United Nations projects without merely approving them passively.

33. Lastly, pluralism consisted of a combination of different ingredients, each of which retained its specificity while contributing to the overall flavour, as in paella, rather than of a mixture of ingredients as in a melting pot, or a combination of separate ingredients as in a salad.

34. Mr. SLABÝ (Czech Republic) observed that the liberalization of the economy and the abandonment of a paternalistic State egalitarianism in his country had produced fundamental social change: in 1991-1992, a considerable proportion of workers had changed jobs or profession. The new social policy had replaced paternalism by a system of compulsory insurance together with optional additional insurance, which was an important stabilizing factor, a system of social support focusing on those genuinely in need, and a system of social assistance aimed at combating poverty and sociopathological phenomena and protecting vulnerable groups.

35. There were 1.2 million ill, disabled, elderly or retired persons among the 10 million inhabitants of the Czech Republic. His Government strongly supported the draft resolution on Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (A/C.3/48/L.3), and drew attention to the framework for a long-term strategy to coordinate the implementation of initiatives and ideas that had emerged from the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons.

36. His delegation looked forward to the proclamation of the International Year of the Family, which would be formally launched on 7 December, and welcomed the intention to hold an interregional expert group meeting in early 1995 to develop appropriate follow-up strategies. In view especially of the great change in family-State relations, the Czech Republic attached much importance to the International Year and had set up a National Coordination Council for its activities, which would include specific action to assist families, as well as a more general programme in the areas of legislation, research and education.

37. As a result of the flourishing of democracy, the whole health and social welfare system of the Czech Republic had been restructured: it no longer reflected any social ideology and was action-oriented, down-to-earth and adapted to the current stage of economic transformation. The restructuring had gone hand-in-hand with other measures, such as changes in the areas of taxation and unemployment, and legislative reforms.

38. The Czech Republic was strongly committed to social development and to the principle of full participation by all. It felt bound by commitments adopted by the former Czechoslovakia in all fields, including social policies.

39. Aware of the need to promote international consultations on the social situation, the former Czechoslovakia had supported the idea of convening the

World Summit for Social Development. His Government intended to participate fully both in the preparations and in the Summit itself, but believed that the Summit could not address every single area of social policy. It should concentrate on identifying priorities, and on improving the United Nations capacity to deliver its social programmes. It should lead to agreements that would be likely to reduce poverty, develop productive employment and enhance social integration. The task would not be an easy one, despite the first steps made by the Preparatory Committee.

40. The transfer from Vienna to New York of the secretariat services relating to social development ought to help integrate the two interrelated aspects of development - economic development and social development - and the social development issues should be handled by a single, autonomous unit, which could perhaps be named the Division for Social Development.

41. Ms. POORT (Denmark), speaking as a representative of Danish youth, said that she would like to recall the "dream" which Martin Luther King had spoken of 30 years earlier: a dream of democracy and human rights which, for Martin Luther King, had not remained a mere vision but had been translated into action.

42. Many things had changed since then, but children and young people were still too often left out of the democratic decision-making process. The world needed young people who dared both to dream and to assume responsibility for the future of all. The world should thus give them space to dream and to act, and it should ensure their education, without which their participation in the decision-making process would not be meaningful. Unfortunately only four Member States out of 184 accorded enough priority to the future generation of decision-makers to include youth representatives in their delegations to the United Nations General Assembly. Being excluded made young people passive and indifferent and diminished their confidence in the formal decision-making process; many reacted by turning to violence or crime.

43. The democratic ideal was not simply a national concern. The United Nations needed to promote youth exchange programmes. Cross-cultural contact and mutual understanding would promote peace, out of which democracy would grow.

44. Government action was no longer sufficient: the private and voluntary sectors - of which youth organizations were an important part - must participate in the elaboration of United Nations policies. In addition, the Organization should review its policies regarding non-governmental organizations and be more open to the many local, national, regional and international organizations whose vitality had been revealed at the Rio Conference; at the same time, it should periodically review those non-governmental organizations having consultative status with the Economic and Social Council to see if they still met the conditions for that status. A more open policy towards non-governmental organizations would help to establish a link between decision-makers in New York and the people of the world, who might otherwise fail to understand the decisions made and react against them.

45. The dream was that some day all States would respect human rights and fundamental freedoms, a commitment they had reaffirmed at the World Conference on Human Rights, held in Vienna in 1993. She welcomed the fact that the 1990

(Ms. Poort, Denmark)

Convention on the Rights of the Child, which was one of the most important instruments ever produced by the United Nations, had been ratified so rapidly by 154 Member States out of 184. She hoped that all States would have ratified it by 1995, the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Child. Unfortunately, some Member States had yet to submit their reports and there was a question whether the Convention had really changed the reality for children. Denmark had amended its legislation in accordance with the Convention, in particular with regard to the treatment of juvenile delinquents. In many parts of the world, however, the Convention was still far from respected: in that connection, she cited the examples of street children and children exploited as labour or as soldiers. Abused children would become crippled adults.

46. Children were a separate category of persons and, as such, had their own rights. It was not enough to proclaim those rights; action must be taken to ensure that they were respected. Too often, UNICEF efforts had been hindered by a lack of political will and of respect for human rights.

47. According to UNICEF statistics, during the past decade alone, as a result of war, 1.5 million children had been killed, 4 million had been disabled and 12 million had been left homeless. Who should care for those survivors, if not the United Nations and, consequently, its Member States? Would it be possible to realize the dream of a world where the United Nations could establish and maintain a peace that ensured the future of children and youth?

48. Young people did not cause war, but were among its main victims. It was up to the decision-makers of the present to set aside animosity so that ethnic conflicts would not be passed on to the next generation. That might not be enough to stop all wars, but action on several fronts could be taken to make things better for youth: just a fraction of the money currently spent on weapons could be used constructively; relief could be given to those countries whose debt burden deprived them of resources to invest in youth (and also deepened the gap between North and South); the industrialized countries could lift the trade restrictions they had imposed, which, according to the Human Development Report 1992, resulted in a loss of $500 billion a year to the developing countries, while the latter received only $50 billion in aid. Aid was still necessary, however, to ensure education in the developing countries until they could profit fully from a free trade market. It was a long-term process, but there was no other solution.

49. The tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Child would be observed in only two years. Substantive initiatives had to be launched immediately or that anniversary would be merely an occasion for the elaboration of visionary plans of action for the year 2000, which would most likely remain just words on paper. The United Nations needed to take stock of what had been accomplished since 1985 and consider what place had been given to young people in all the United Nations declarations and conventions. The observance in 1995 of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Child provide Member States with an excellent opportunity to include youth representatives in their delegations to the fiftieth session of the General Assembly, so that their voices could be heard just like those of their elders. It would also be appropriate to establish in 1995 a forum of non-governmental youth organizations. That would be the best way to promote democracy and observe the Organization's fiftieth anniversary.

(Ms. Poort, Denmark)

50. The United Nations was on the agenda among young people in Denmark, where a United Nations week had been organized to increase understanding of the need for global cooperation and to encourage a critical evaluation of the current United Nations system.

51. If only young people were given the chance to participate in decision-making at the local, national and global levels, they would be happy to assume responsibility and demonstrate their commitment.

52. Mr. ALMANA (Qatar) said that the international community's interest in social development questions had steadily increased since the United Nations had first considered them in 1952. That was only logical considering that ensuring security and development was in fact the single noble goal of the international community and served as a justification for its very existence.

53. Protecting society meant better protection for children, vulnerable groups, the elderly, youth, women and the disabled. It was important also to protect the family, which was the basic element of society.

54. All the resolutions adopted by the Economic and Social Council, together with the declarations, programmes, guidelines and decades dedicated to a particular aspect of social development, had not been able to prevent the deterioration of the world social situation. It had been recognized that the policies followed thus far needed to be reviewed and a proposal had therefore been made to convene a summit conference for social development; thus, the General Assembly, in its resolution 47/92, had decided to convene a World Summit for Social Development, to be held in March 1995 in Copenhagen. That major international event would give the international community another chance to focus on social development and should result in the implementation of regional programmes within the framework of a world plan of action.

55. The objectives of the Summit - the alleviation of poverty, the expansion of productive employment and the enhancement of social integration - must form the foundation of any integrated economic development plan which took account of the demands of social justice. The Summit could also provide an opportunity for all States to renew their commitment to promote sustainable development and to close, if only partially, the gap between countries, regions and peoples.

56. The decision to convene the Summit had been motivated to a large degree by the realization that to maintain a synergetic relationship between economic and social progress and progress in the area of social justice promoted equality among people. Social development was a major, if not the major, objective of every national community. However, the availability of the means to attain that objective varied according to each country's situation. The developing countries were experiencing serious problems linked to poverty, unemployment and low productivity. Recently, the market economy countries had been seriously affected by the recession and unemployment, which had had negative consequences on social well-being in those countries. Those problems had also affected countries in transition, where the slow-down of economic activity had caused a slump in real incomes and had aggravated social problems to an alarming degree.

(Mr. Almana, Qatar)

57. Many countries, particularly in Africa, had had to confront natural disasters whose consequences were felt most severely by the developing countries which lacked the resources and infrastructures needed for recovery. Migratory movements linked to natural disasters, civil wars or ethnic conflicts could, considering the overpopulation of the areas in question, lead to international conflicts.

58. Poverty led to hunger, malnutrition and the disintegration of social services, which, in turn, hurt all of society. It was clear that social development could not occur without economic development. The relationship between the two might even be referred to as one of cause and effect. By adopting the Charter of the United Nations, States had committed themselves, individually and collectively, to promote "higher standards of living, full employment, and conditions of economic and social progress and development". In that connection, his country devoted all due attention to social development. Indeed, the State of Qatar provided free education at all levels, including the preschool level, and guaranteed free medical and child care, without discrimination. The State also covered all expenses related to care for the disabled and the elderly. Social development had only one objective: to promote human dignity and prosperity. Nothing undermined dignity more than poverty and hunger. The only way to eliminate them, particularly in the developing countries, was to create jobs, guarantee investments and provide the means for training, since it was true that human beings could maintain their dignity only when they fulfilled a productive role in society, and they could do that only if they had received adequate education and training.

59. Mr. KASOULIDES (Cyprus) said that the preparations for the World Summit on Social Development had already made it possible to lay the foundations for a constructive plan of action, covering all aspects of social development, including the core issues which would be addressed during the Summit (the enhancement of social integration, particularly of the more disadvantaged and marginalized groups; the alleviation and reduction of poverty; and the expansion of productive employment) and which would bring social inequalities on a global level into focus.

60. The economic difficulties experienced, to varying degrees by the developing countries, the countries in transition and the developed countries, with the accompanying extreme poverty, on the one hand, and xenophobic reactions, on the other, justified the appeal made to the international community by the General Assembly in its resolution 47/92 to take concerted action with a view to attaining a balance between economic efficiency and social justice, and rethinking the interaction between the social function of the State, market responses to social demands and the imperatives of sustainable development.

61. With respect to the developing countries, while the 1993 Report on the World Social Situation (A/48/50) left some margin of reasonable hope for the future of those with rapid and sustained economic growth, in other countries poverty had increased in both extent and intensity. Stable government was a factor that could help reverse that trend. In that regard, the action undertaken recently by the United Nations to facilitate democratic elections and provide electoral assistance should, in the long term, mitigate the results of internal strife and the breakdown of legitimate government.

(Mr. Kasoulides, Cyprus)

62. In the area of social development, it was important to focus more particularly on the situation of the most vulnerable groups, such as children and youth, the disabled and the elderly, with special emphasis on poor countries where those groups were even more marginalized. His country, which attached particular importance to enhancing the role of women in social, economic and political life, hoped that the Fourth World Conference on Women, to be held in 1995, would review existing strategies and identify the remaining inequalities so as to create equal opportunities for women in society. The current unemployment of a sizeable number of young people was also a worrisome development that needed to be addressed.

63. His country where the family was considered to be the backbone of society hoped that the observance of the International Year of the Family in 1994 would help to reinforce that institution and increase awareness of the rights and obligations of family members, particularly with regard to parental responsibilities.

64. His delegation hoped that the General Assembly would adopt by consensus the draft resolution that had been submitted to it by the Economic and Social Council on the standard rules on the equalization of opportunities for persons with disabilities (A/C.3/48/L.3). His country was currently implementing social programmes aimed at providing health care and shelter for the elderly. Population ageing was also a major issue and pragmatic policies should be adopted to utilize that sector of the population more productively and to provide more effectively for their social needs.

65. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the international community should intensify its efforts to protect children, particularly those who were poor, exploited or delinquent. Whether they were street children or children living in a country caught up in a civil war, their plight had become so critical that it should be addressed as a matter of absolute priority. Children, who represented the future of the world, were also the most vulnerable segment of the societies that made up that world.

66. Mr. MAQUIEIRA (Chile), speaking on behalf of the Latin American States members of the Rio Group, said that the Heads of States of those countries had recently, in the capital of his country, renewed their full support for the preparations and convening of the World Summit for Social Development and reaffirmed the importance they attached to the objectives set forth in General Assembly resolution 47/92, which implied that economic and social development should be viewed as an integral part of the overall development process within the context of which the political and social stability of each country was closely linked to international peace and security.

67. The World Summit for Social Development would provide the heads of State and Government with an opportunity to analyse the three core issues defined by the General Assembly, namely, the enhancement of social integration, the alleviation and reduction of poverty, and the expansion of productive employment. In the Latin American and Caribbean region, economic development alone had not yet led to greater social justice; distribution policies, for their part, had not triggered automatic economic growth. It was therefore

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(Mr. Maquieira, Chile)

essential that priority be given to policies aimed at simultaneously eliminating poverty, promoting social integration and developing productive employment: only such policies could ensure that social welfare accompanied economic growth.

68. In that context, it was for the State to organize the fight against poverty by providing equal opportunity for the members of the most vulnerable social groups and enabling them to be included in development. Assistance policies could do no more than lessen effects of poverty, which could be eliminated only by involving the poor in productive projects and improving productivity to meet the challenge of competition. At the same time, the State should allocate sufficient resources to public services to provide access by the poor and should devise mechanisms for monitoring the effectiveness of social expenditures. Strengthening equal opportunity meant combating the marginalization, found in Latin America, for example, of major categories of the population - children, young people, old people, women, ethnic groups - by giving them the means for genuine integration into society. That was the purpose of health, nutrition and education policies and policies aimed at providing employment for young people and equal opportunity for women in the economic, political and social fields. The family must be given renewed value as the ideal framework for promoting social integration, and that integration should be based on greater participation by the individuals and groups that were the beneficiaries of social policy, which the State should decentralize.

69. As for the expansion of productive employment, the economies of the Latin American countries had to be better integrated into the world markets if the relationship between growth and competitiveness was to be made a lasting reality. It was also important to raise productivity, for job creation depended on the level and structure of growth. Investment should go hand in hand with productive and technological development policies in an effort to open up the economy and improve the labour market. Thus there was a need to define new employment policies, based on the adaptation of labour through technical training, and to resolve the problems raised by the extension of the non-structured employment sector and the need to integrate the economy of the rural areas, where most poor people lived.

70. The countries of the region knew from experience how difficult it was to reconcile development and social justice in a unilateral approach based either on the State or on the market. The magnitude of the problems to be resolved made it imperative for the State, the market and society to come together to reduce conflicts and conclude agreements that combined fairness with economic dynamism.

71. At a time when the economy and communications were becoming linked world wide, the transnational character of social phenomena such as migrations and environmental problems made it impossible to continue viewing social welfare as a national issue. On the contrary, they provided an opportunity for intensifying international and regional cooperation for social development and focusing it on the developing countries. The World Summit for Social Development should serve to bring out a common awareness and define an international framework for maintaining that awareness. It was necessary in particular to coordinate macroeconomic policies, strengthen policies on openness of markets, design financing policies and eliminate practices harmful to the environment. The Preparatory Committee for the World Summit, which would be

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(Mr. Maquieira, Chile)

holding its first substantive session from 31 January to 11 February 1994, should begin consideration of those issues and define the agenda for the Summit and the instruments to be approved at the Summit by the heads of State or Government. The goals to be discussed at the Summit were so complex that achieving them would require all the innovation capacities of Governments, non-governmental organizations, society and technical experts. In that connection, the member countries of the Rio Group deeply appreciated the Mexican Government's having organized, at Oaxaca in September, a meeting on poverty and social development, in which about 100 experts on the above-mentioned problems had participated. Its results would certainly be of interest to the Preparatory Committee for the World Summit.

72. Ms. ASHIPALA (Namibia) said that the Secretary-General had affirmed the inextricable link between peace and social and economic development by stating, in the "Agenda for Peace": "The social stability needed for productive growth is nurtured by conditions in which people can readily express their will. For this, strong domestic institutions of participation are essential. Promoting such institutions means promoting the empowerment of the unorganized, the poor, the marginalized."

73. In most developing countries, persons with disabilities were among the poor and marginalized. Their disabilities were an impediment to social and economic participation. In document A/C.3/48/L.3, which contained the text of a draft resolution that the Economic and Social Council had recommended to the General Assembly for adoption, it was stated that the number of persons with disabilities in the world was large and growing. That was certainly true for southern Africa, a subregion that had been ravaged by wars of destabilization and liberation, leaving thousands of children orphaned or disabled. In Namibia, disabled people were found mainly in the rural areas, where armed conflict had prevailed during the colonial years. In the developing countries, some disabled women were heading families single-handedly, and their efforts were made even more difficult in countries stricken by drought.

74. It was a well-known fact that disabled women were the victims of discrimination based on both their gender and their disability. Despite their membership in national organizations, their voices were seldom heard. Thus her delegation looked forward to the participation of women with disabilities, especially disabled women in rural areas, in the World Conference on Women in 1995. They were the ones who could speak the best of their experience.

75. The Constitution of Namibia provided for protection of the rights of disabled people and the enhancement of their integration in the spheres of education, health, employment and accessibility. The Namibian Government was preparing detailed programmes for the provision of services to disabled persons. Through the Inter-Ministerial and National Coordination Committees, the National Organization of the Disabled had been advocating the equal rights of the disabled and stressing the need to integrate them into the education, health, sports and economic fields. Although some progress had been made, it had to be noted that the problem of the disabled in Namibia could not be resolved with the available human and material resources.

76. The Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities had served as a background for a workshop organized by the Namibia

(Ms. Ashipala, Namibia)

Organization of Disabled Persons in July 1993 to consider draft legislation on disabilities in Namibia. Following the workshop, a six-member drafting committee had been established to begin preparing the draft. The drafting committee would be visiting a number of countries which already had such legislation in order to learn from their experience.

77. Namibia supported the Rules, which it believed could serve as an adequate mechanism to promote the rights of the disabled and provide the services they needed. They would herald a new form of international cooperation to alleviate the problems of the disabled, especially in the countries that had limited capacities to address those problems. For the disabled to be integrated into all spheres of society, however, societies must change their attitude towards those persons. The end of the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons must mark the beginning of an era of inclusion. Namibia reiterated its recommendation that persons with disabilities should sit on the Panel of Eminent Persons established by the General Assembly.

78. Disabled persons in the developing countries were making strenuous efforts to redress their social condition. To complement those efforts, regional mechanisms such as the Southern African Federation of the Disabled (SAFOD) must be given sufficient resources to enable them to render assistance at the national level.

79. The link between peace and social and economic development could not be overemphasized. Civil wars, poverty, drought, hunger and lack of health care continued to be a major constraint, especially in the developing countries. The problems of disabled people could not be resolved without reducing the gap between the haves and the have-nots. In that spirit, her delegation welcomed the World Summit on Social Development and intended to ensure that disabled persons fully participated in it.

80. Mr. PALIHAKKARA (Sri Lanka) said that the end of the cold war had created numerous opportunities and challenges for which it was difficult to prescribe appropriate strategies, but that it represented a point of departure for seeking solutions to fundamental social issues, using an integrated approach. Since it was important to address the causes of conflict and insecurity throughout the world, United Nations preventive-diplomacy strategies should embrace not only political and military aspects, but also the socio-economic dimensions of peace and security.

81. Under those conditions, it was natural for there to be strong support for the convening in 1995 of a World Summit for Social Development, which would not only be held at the highest political level, but would chart a new course of action at the national, regional and international levels to achieve growth with social justice and peace and security with equity.

82. The high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council in 1993 had provided an analysis of the causes and effects of social development problems and had highlighted a large measure of convergence of viewpoints. He hoped that the rest of the preparatory period would be devoted to substantive work, based on that analysis and on the high-quality documents submitted by the Secretariat, to set out the major issues for consideration at the 1995 Summit. His delegation awaited with interest the work of the two meetings of experts hosted

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(Mr. Palihakkara, Sri Lanka)

by Sweden and the Netherlands, which it hoped would lead to policy recommendations. Given the all-encompassing nature of the subject-matter before the Summit, his delegation urged the Secretariat to obtain information and contributions from a wide variety of sources, including regional organizations that had already undertaken pioneering work in fields such as poverty alleviation, employment and social cohesion.

83. Sri Lanka expressed its sincere appreciation to the Chairman of the Preparatory Committee, who, in his statement on 20 October, had spoken of what remained to be done before the substantive preparatory work could begin. The Sri Lankan delegation paid tribute to his diligence and efficiency, which had made it possible to reach a consensus on the organizational and substantive work of the Summit, and also commended his untiring efforts in holding consultations.

84. The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) had been one of the first regional organizations to undertake target-oriented action programmes for poverty alleviation in the context of people-centred development. In that way, it had been possible to develop, at the national and regional levels, poverty alleviation strategies, which, moreover, were in fact being implemented. It was hoped that the Summit secretariat would consult with the SAARC secretariat in order to obtain information on such strategies and thus contribute to the substantive preparations for the Summit. The practical experience of one of the world's most populous subregions should be drawn upon. His delegation also drew the Secretariat's attention to a recent conference on social development and poverty, held in Mexico with the assistance of UNDP and the World Bank.

85. Social development problems were not peculiar to the developing world and, as the 1993 Report on the World Social Situation (A/48/50) stressed, developed countries had also been affected, albeit to a lesser degree. In his report on the work of the Organization (A/48/1), the Secretary-General had recognized that the Organization had not placed sufficient emphasis on the social and economic sectors and stated his determination to correct that shortcoming. Promoting social development was no less important than restoring and maintaining peace since the Charter itself stipulated that it was necessary "to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom". It was gratifying to learn that the Division for Social Policy and Development had been established in New York, which would preclude any fragmentation in its work. He hoped that those new institutional arrangements would facilitate preparations for the World Summit and broader consultations among Member States.

86. Mr. PHANIT (Thailand) said that his Government believed that people must be at the centre of development and that development must begin with the individual and the family. Since children were treasured symbols of hope throughout the world, his Government had enacted numerous measures to ensure the security of Thai children and was currently considering various stringent penalties against child brutality, including life imprisonment or the death penalty for those who were found guilty of illegally detaining children under 15 years of age and causing their death through inhumane treatment. The Royal Thai Government had acceded in 1992 to the Convention on the Rights of the Child. In addition, it had adopted a national declaration on children for the period from 1992 to 2012.

(Mr. Phanit, Thailand)

87. Referring to a group that was all too often ignored, the Thai delegation said that disabled persons were considered integral and productive members of Thai society and that the Government had set up a committee composed of representatives of the private and public sectors to provide advice on policy, welfare and rehabilitation for the disabled. In addition, the Government provided education and training for the disabled as well as other vulnerable groups in society. It supported the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons and the World Programme of Action. It also supported the ESCAP Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons (1993-2002). On 16 June 1993, the Prime Minister of Thailand had signed a proclamation on the full participation and equality of disabled persons in the Asian and Pacific region.

88. The family had always represented the cornerstone of Thai culture and the guardian of its traditions. Accordingly, the Government had decided in 1990 to make 14 April National Family Day and had set up a national committee on the family. His Government fully supported the proclamation of the International Year of the Family (1994) and intended, in celebrating the event, to convene a national assembly on the family, which would submit recommendations to the Government as a contribution to national efforts to promote family development. Thailand felt that strong, unified families were well equipped to assume responsibilities towards the elderly, the disabled and children and were part of the answer to many social problems, including crime, drug abuse, mental health, education and poverty.

89. The Thai Government, like many others, understood that social development went hand in hand with economic prosperity and that the international community must pool its resources in order to achieve real economic growth. None the less, the initial impetus must come from domestic policy. Thailand strongly supported convening the World Summit for Social Development and would actively participate in the preparatory process beginning in 1994. The Thai Government had established a social cabinet for formulating policies and finding solutions to a number of social problems and had set up a joint committee, which was chaired by the Prime Minister and whose members were from the private sector and the Government.

90. His delegation supported the three core issues, to be addressed at the Summit, which were clearly interrelated: social integration, poverty reduction and productive employment. In pursuit of those goals, the World Summit must adopt not only a final declaration, but also a realistic programme of action. In order to ensure the success of the World Summit, the Preparatory Committee must prepare its work by coordinating efforts with Governments, non-governmental organizations and other world bodies; all Member States must participate actively not only at the beginning, but also during and after the Summit; and lastly, it was necessary to establish priorities within a realistic plan of action to be adopted.

91. Mr. SALANDER (Sweden), speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries, expressed appreciation to the Government of the Slovak Republic for hosting the Conference of Ministers of Social Affairs, held in Bratislava in June and July 1993. From the European point of view, the Conference had proved valuable in view of the unprecedented changes that had taken place in the region since the previous ministerial conference in 1987. The era of confrontation had since given way to a fruitful discussion of challenges in the field of social

(Mr. Salander, Sweden)

development. While the primary responsibility in that regard remained at the national level, there was a need for a multilateral European forum at the political level to deal with questions of social policy and social development. From a global point of view, the Conference had also been useful because it had decided to submit to the Preparatory Committee its own report as well as a background document prepared for the World Summit.

92. The Nordic countries, like many others, had to cope with rising unemployment and increasing costs in the social welfare systems, combined with reduced economic growth. The challenge was to continue sustainable social development ensuring a fair distribution of social services and benefits as well as income among all people. The social security system was helping to reduce poverty and facilitate integration of disadvantaged groups into society. In many cases, particularly in the third world, those systems were not yet fully developed and covered only a limited segment of the population and a limited number of contingencies since they were highly dependent on the level of economic growth of those countries. Many countries were currently trying to follow structural adjustment programmes in order to come to grips with the imbalances in their economies. Those programmes were often characterized by reduction in public spending, leading to significant decreases in social expenditures, which in turn, worsened the situation of the disadvantaged and marginalized groups in society, at least in the short term. Two measures should be envisaged to improve the situation. First, since those that suffered most from economic cutbacks were often those who were not covered by any social security schemes, which in many third world countries were limited to wage earners living in cities (while the consequences of structural adjustment programmes were often most severe in rural areas where people lacked any kind of social protection), the "social contract" should be negotiated. In other words, there was a need to establish a consensus among the population concerning the issues of social solidarity and the redistribution of resources. Second, it was necessary to strengthen the international exchange of information and experience in the field of social security, which could help developing countries reduce the impact of the economic situation on the most vulnerable population groups.

93. In the past 40 years, life expectancy had greatly increased. Despite remarkable improvements, enormous health problems remained. Mortality levels in developing countries were still unacceptably high; and AIDS, tropical diseases and tuberculosis were widespread. All countries were struggling with the problems of controlling health expenditures and making health care accessible to the entire population. The economic recession in many countries and the ageing of the population added further to the difficulties. In the past, too little attention had been given to health, and, in development plans, health expenditures were often regarded more as a burden for the economy. The World Development Report, published by the World Bank in collaboration with the World Health Organization, strongly emphasized the role of health in development efforts. Investing in health was a means of accelerating economic development since good health increased the economic productivity of individuals and the economic growth rate of countries. That idea should be borne in mind when preparing for the World Summit for Social Development, to be held in 1995 in Copenhagen.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS
General Assembly
FORTY-EIGHTH SESSION
Official Records

THIRD COMMITTEE
16th meeting
held on
Monday, 25 October 1993
at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 16th MEETING

Chairman:	Mr. KUKAN	(Slovakia)
later:	Mrs. AL-HAMAMI (Vice-Chairman)	(Yemen)
later:	Mr. KUKAN (Chairman)	(Slovakia)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 109: SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE WORLD SOCIAL SITUATION AND TO YOUTH, AGEING, DISABLED PERSONS AND THE FAMILY (continued) (A/48/3 (chap. VII.D), A/48/24, A/48/56-E/1993/6, A/48/207, A/48/289, A/48/291, A/48/293, A/48/359, A/48/462, A/48/476 and A/48/484; E/1993/50/Rev.1; A/C.3/48/L.2, L.3 and L.4)

1. Mrs. MBELLA NGOMBA (Cameroon) said that events since the end of the cold war had made social imperatives for development once again the focus of international cooperation.

2. Where conditions undermining the ability of a number of nations to make a meaningful contribution to global development were concerned, the numbers spoke for themselves: during the past year, some 500,000 children under five had died as a result of wars or famine in Eastern Europe and the Horn of Africa. According to UNICEF, malnutrition, disease and poverty claimed about 35,000 young lives daily. By the end of the millennium, the number of elderly persons would reach 1.2 billion. Given that one person in ten would then be elderly, a situation without historical precedent, the need to afford that segment of the population a greater role in society was now recognized.

3. In addition to the aforementioned factors, rising unemployment and deteriorating living conditions were a constant threat to development. In that regard, the Secretary-General had noted recently, on World Habitat Day, that the existence of 1 million homeless people in the world was incompatible with the concept of sustainable development. The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development had linked human settlements with environmental protection and sustainable development through the adoption of Agenda 21, which emphasized improving the quality of life in both urban and rural areas.

4. The developing countries, including the African nations, were subjected also to the burden of external forces, such as unfavourable terms of trade and debt servicing, which deprived them of resources needed to implement and monitor social programmes. Lack of resources also limited activities at the international level: thus, for the 1992-1993 biennium, the regular programme budget of the former Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat was merely $2,735,700, of which 37 per cent was allocated to programmes for the ageing and 63 per cent went to programmes for youth and disabled persons.

5. Given the scope of the problems at the national and international levels, her delegation welcomed the establishment of the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development, as part of the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the Secretariat. It was hoped that the Division for Social Policy and Development of the Department would place long overdue priority on social issues and their linkage to global development. It supported strengthening the Commission for Social Development which, over the years, had significantly contributed to sensitizing the international community and mobilizing its support for programmes for the most vulnerable groups of the population (the disabled, youth and the elderly) and for the protection of the

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family. In that regard, greater attention should be given to disabled women, who thus far had been marginalized.

6. She welcomed the Secretary-General's proposal, contained in his report on the work of the Organization (A/48/1), to set out the United Nations approach to development in full in "An agenda for development", a preliminary report which would be submitted to the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session. Her delegation hoped that the agenda for development would define the social and economic dimensions of global peace and security and would set the guidelines for future United Nations action in the economic and social fields, which should be at the centre of all development efforts.

7. Her delegation recommended the adoption of the standard rules on the equalization of opportunities for persons with disabilities, whose consideration would be one of the highlights of the forty-eighth session and would afford States the opportunity to make a strong moral and political commitment to a social group which had been kept from progressing by other people's ignorance, neglect and superstition. It supported the appointment of a special rapporteur to monitor the implementation of the standard rules and believed that the work of the rapporteur should be financed from the regular budget. Her delegation also endorsed the proposal to create one or more positions of interregional adviser to provide direct services to States, particularly to the developing countries.

8. The international community needed to develop a long-term strategy to advance the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons to the year 2000 and beyond. Her delegation appreciated the work accomplished by the group of experts, which had met in Vancouver in 1992 to devise that strategy, and urged States to contribute by making their views known.

9. Her delegation supported the drafting of a world youth programme of action to the year 2000 and beyond and endorsed the request to the Secretary-General to continue the preparation of that draft and to Member States and concerned non-governmental organizations to prepare national programmes of action in anticipation of the tenth anniversary of the International Youth Year in 1995.

10. Her delegation also endorsed the idea of linking the tenth anniversary of the International Youth Year to the celebration of the International Year of the Family, to be launched in December 1993, and it commended the efforts of the Coordinator of the International Year of the Family for sensitizing and mobilizing public opinion to that effect.

11. With regard to the elderly, her delegation continued to endorse the International Plan of Action on Ageing, adopted in 1982, the Proclamation on Ageing and the United Nations Principles for Older Persons, adopted in 1991 to encourage Governments to include measures for older persons in their development programmes. In that regard, global targets on ageing for the year 2001 should be mentioned as they would generate the support of international cooperation when setting national objectives and implementing community-based programmes.

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(Mrs. Mbella Ngomba, Cameroon)

12. The deterioration of living conditions throughout the world should force the international community to seek new approaches. That was why her delegation fully supported the current efforts aimed at convening a World Summit for Social Development in 1995 in Copenhagen, the preparatory process of which had been described by Mr. Somavia. It was essential to ensure that the developing countries fully participated in the Summit and its preparation, to establish national committees to that end, to mobilize the necessary resources to fund related activities and to allocate a large portion of those necessary resources from the regular budget, as had been done for similar conferences.

13. Her delegation also supported the efforts of the Department of Public Information to heighten awareness of the core issues of the Summit and hoped that the participation of non-governmental and local organizations would be encouraged throughout the preparatory phase. Her country would continue to fulfil its responsibilities as a member of the Bureau of the Preparatory Committee of the Summit.

14. Mr. MUJICA (Cuba) said that, ever since the adoption of resolution 47/92 on the convening of a world summit for social development, the social dimension of development had been a core concern of the international community. Having long been the guinea-pig of economic and political institutions and authorities which controlled their existence in the name of abstract theories and reduced them to the rank of mere statistics, human beings must once again become both subject and object of the development process.

15. In future, economic policies and models would have to be evaluated in terms of their ability to respond to the material and spiritual needs of the population as a whole. That principle, which was of crucial importance for peace, democracy and respect for human rights, must be applied to both national policies and international development strategies. At the dawn of the new millennium, the relevance of models and strategies that perpetuated, at both the national and the international levels, the injustices associated with so many of the social ills afflicting mankind should be called into question.

16. Any system which bore the seeds of glaring inequality and injustice could not be considered effective. The degree of wealth attained by a country, its economic growth rate and the extent to which its institutions were democratized mattered little when racial discrimination and xenophobia prevailed, when millions of human beings were jobless and homeless and could not satisfy their hunger, when millions of children were subjected to cruel exploitation in rural areas, in factories or in the lucrative businesses of child pornography and prostitution, or when others were sold illegally for adoption or even for the removal of their vital organs.

17. In that context, Cuba intended to participate actively in the preparatory process of the World Summit for Social Development, which would afford the international community an opportunity to consider from a fresh perspective the true causes of the deplorable social situation in the contemporary world and take bold action. The Summit must not be characterized by the usual series of negative observations with no real effort to communicate. States must attend it in a constructive spirit, with the political will to achieve tangible results.

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(Mr. Mujica, Cuba)

18. Appropriately, the principal themes of the Summit would be the reduction of poverty, the expansion of productive employment and social integration. At the national level, those three objectives could be attained by correcting the imbalances arising from an irrational international economic order and eliminating growing disparities between a wealthy North and an impoverished South. The huge social cost of those imbalances manifested itself in hunger, illiteracy, lack of hygiene, the abandonment of children, unemployment, a high mortality rate and the persistence of curable diseases, including fresh outbreaks of malaria and cholera in Africa and Latin America, respectively.

19. In his delegation's view, neo-liberal policies had made the objective of social equality even more unattainable, aggravated the economic crisis and undermined the social, political and cultural structures of States, thus paving the way for social unrest.

20. That was illustrated by the fact that, in the industrialized and developing countries alike, the recession had had severe social repercussions. High rates of unemployment and the growing marginalization of vast segments of the population gave rise to various alarming phenomena: ethnic conflicts, racial confrontation, xenophobia, neo-Fascist acts of violence. Such was the consequence of strategies, models and policies which, because they had not accorded human beings the place they deserved, had delayed the very social development they had loudly claimed to promote.

21. Action based on human justice and solidarity must be launched. It should encourage cooperation between States and receive assistance from the specialized agencies of the United Nations system, on the understanding that, the granting of such assistance to the developing world must not be subject to unfair conditions which further aggravated social problems. With a view to meeting current and future challenges, the social and economic sector must also be promoted within the United Nations system.

22. It was regrettable that the 1993 Report on the World Social Situation (E/1993/50) had fallen short of the expectations of many delegations, including his own, in that it was no more than a compilation of data provided by other entities. Future analyses should be more detailed and carried out more independently.

23. More than 30 years earlier, Cuba had chosen a development model that could satisfy the material and spiritual needs of its population on the basis of a just and equitable distribution of wealth. Thus, with a per capita income ten times lower than that of the seven most industrialized countries, Cuba managed to do as well, if not better, than those countries in the areas of health and education. Not only had that development model made it possible to respond to basic needs in the areas of health, food, employment and cultural development, but it had also encouraged social freedom and political democracy through large-scale popular participation.

24. The soundness of the Cuban undertaking lay precisely in its social effectiveness, which was currently being put to the test by the severe impact of the international economic crisis on the underdeveloped world and, in the

(Mr. Mujica, Cuba)

specific case of Cuba, by that criminal, unjust and illegal measure, namely, the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against it.

25. Having proved that social development could anticipate economic development and even be the driving force behind it, Cuba pinned its hopes on the World Summit for Social Development and fervently desired its success.

26. Ms. KNUDSEN (Norway), stressing the importance of the United Nations instruments on disabled persons - the World Programme of Action, the framework for a long-term strategy, the standard rules on the equalization of opportunities for persons with disabilities - noted that the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons had not yielded the hoped-for results. That meant that the effort already under way must be pursued until such time as the objectives fixed had been fully attained. She recalled that, while the United Nations could facilitate progress, States were primarily responsible for ensuring equal opportunities for all. To that end, all Governments should establish national committees which included representatives of organizations of persons with disabilities, as set forth in rule 17 of the standard rules.

27. Norway's Plan of Action for the Disabled was coming to an end but would be revised for the period 1994-1997. It set general policy objectives and also contained about 90 specific measures for which various ministries were responsible. The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs regularly reviewed the Plan of Action, and its implementation was also monitored by the State Council for the Disabled.

28. The Winter Olympic Games of 1994 would take place in Lillehammer, Norway, and would be followed by the Winter Games for the Disabled. The municipality intended to make the town more accessible to disabled persons at that time.

29. Ageing persons also benefited from the measures taken for the fuller integration of disabled persons into society. In Norway, every possible effort was being made to facilitate the participation of the elderly in decision-making and leisure activities. Generally speaking, an effort was being made to ensure that the community responded as best it could to the needs of all and that no one was excluded. Norway hoped that the question of the living conditions of people with disabilities would be included in the agenda of the Summit to be held in Copenhagen in 1995. It also hoped that the specific needs of disabled women would be included in the agenda of the World Conference on Women, to be held in Beijing in 1995.

30. In conclusion, it was essential to continue efforts at the international level to promote the integration of disabled persons and to ensure the implementation of the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities, which were not binding. The envisaged monitoring system should help to attain that objective. The social integration of disabled persons should be enriching for society as a whole and for each of its members.

31. Mrs. PAMPHILOVA (Russian Federation) said that the changes that had taken place in Eastern Europe had erected serious obstacles to social development. Russia was in full agreement with the conclusions of the thirty-fourth Conference of European Ministers Responsible for Social Affairs, in that the

success of economic reform depended on the existence of an effective social welfare system, in conformity with international standards.

32. The inclusion in the agenda of the 1995 World Summit for Social Development of an item on assistance to countries in transition would demonstrate the willingness of the international community to assist those countries to solve their social problems and would affirm its solidarity in that regard. Technical assistance furnished in a timely manner, or in other words, immediately, to the countries of Eastern Europe, including the Russian Federation, would enable that region of the world to recover its equilibrium.

33. In Russia, the liberalization of prices, the elimination of central planning and the introduction of a new fiscal regime, among other changes, had been accompanied by a considerable drop in purchasing power. The standard of living had continued to decline. Unfortunately, the Government had not been in a position to absorb the shock of those economic changes, notwithstanding the measures it had undertaken in the social sector. Inflation was such that it had become necessary to periodically review pensions and other benefits, which had not, however, offset the drop in purchasing power. Under such conditions, people had lost confidence in the future, particularly since the situation was changing very fast, perhaps too fast for people to adjust to.

34. The tragic events of the previous October in Moscow should be examined in that light. The social consequences of the reforms must also be taken into consideration. Opposition to those reforms on the part of a segment of the population was not so much attributable to ideological considerations as to the deprivations caused by the new system. By all accounts, the economic reforms had not been a panacea.

35. Various parallel phenomena existed currently in Russia. Along with the decline in the standard of living of most people, the increasing income gap should be mentioned. In 1991, the ratio between the lowest and the highest incomes had been 1 to 2. Currently that ratio stood at 1 to 7 1/2. The poor regions had become poorer and the rich regions richer. Also significant was the fact that families with children were particularly hard hit. Furthermore, those who belonged to the most productive sectors, such as management, were, paradoxically, the lowest paid. The result had been a "brain drain" and a nationwide decline in intellectual potential. Those were the kinds of problems that needed to be resolved without delay. There was also unemployment, which affected professional women in particular.

36. In such an environment, it should come as no surprise that new forms of social service and new, autonomous social welfare systems had developed, drawing on the active participation of citizens.

37. With regard to social policies, the priorities were as follows: to stabilize the standard of living, curtail unemployment, guarantee a minimum wage, help the working population to adapt to the new market conditions, and provide social welfare and housing for all members of the population.

38. With regard to policy on disabled persons, the Government had begun to draft a set of laws, including a social assistance system which took into

(Mrs. Pamphilova, Russian Federation)

account standards set by the United Nations. The implementation of that legislation had been delayed, however, by the shortage of resources.

39. Measures had been taken in the Russian Federation with regard to the International Year of the Family. The Government had drawn up a national plan for children, which incorporated the principles of the World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children. A service to benefit large families had also been instituted.

40. Currently, however, owing to the circumstances, the social welfare system was limping along. Aware that no alternative existed, the population was amenable to reforms, provided that the latter were reasonable.

41. It was to be hoped that the World Summit for Social Development would provide an opportunity for exploring new forms of international cooperation to deal with social problems, which affected every country in the world.

42. Ms. REIKO AOKI (Japan) stressed that social development and economic development had to go hand in hand. In Japan, quality of life was not a political slogan but a goal shared by all sectors of society. Her delegation thus applauded the convening of the World Summit for Social Development to be held in Copenhagen in 1995. The Summit was the ideal occasion to review the achievements of the United Nations since the adoption in 1969 of the Declaration on Social Progress and Development, and to ponder prospects for the future at the dawn of the twenty-first century. Her delegation hoped that, in its examination of the three core issues selected - poverty, employment and social integration - the Summit would stress the security of the individual over that of the State. Solidarity among developed and developing countries would also be key to its success. It should be planned in a pragmatic manner, in accordance with the ideas set forth in the Consensus of Dakar, so as to avoid flights of empty rhetoric.

43. Emphasizing the value of the International Plan of Action on Aging, she observed that ageing was quickly becoming one of the most serious problems of modern societies. In 1993, 13.5 per cent of the Japanese were over the age of 65, and that ratio was likely to reach 25 per cent by the year 2021. Japan had a national plan of action - the Gold Plan for the Elderly - which was designed to improve the quality of life for the members of that group. Rather than exclude older persons, society should put their experience and wisdom to use. An international exchange of information and experience might prove useful in that regard.

44. Japan commended the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities. As the Secretary-General had stated in his report on the Implementation of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons (A/48/462, para. 2), the major challenge of the post-Decade era would be to adopt activities with direct benefits to persons with disabilities. Japan was committed to achieving the objectives of the Decade and felt that its labours should be prolonged until the objectives of the World Programme of Action were fully realized. In 1982, Japan had formulated long-term programmes, followed, in 1987, by the establishment of priority goals for the second half of the

(Ms. Reiko Aoki, Japan)

Decade. Those programmes had been revised in 1993 for the period following the Decade; their aim was to upgrade education and training for disabled persons, to create jobs for them, to enhance their welfare and living environment, to afford them increased access to shopping, cultural, recreational and sports facilities, and to foster international cooperation for those purposes. Japan was one of the sponsors of the proposal to establish an Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons.

45. In view of the importance of the family, the basic unit in society, full account must be taken in the International Year of the Family of the need both to respect human rights, and to reflect the diverse forms that families took and the changing patterns of family life. Japan supported the proposal that inter-agency meetings should be held in order to ensure the cooperation that was vital for the success of the Year.

46. Social development was a goal that must be pursued everywhere in the world in order to create conditions that would allow all people, including the elderly and the handicapped, to enjoy an equal right to health and security and to participate appropriately in society; that was why her Government would participate actively in the preparations for the World Summit for Social Development.

47. Mr. ABDULLAH (India) said that over the centuries his country had managed to preserve its rich diversity and to blend, particularly since independence, the traditional and the modern. In that connection, the Indian experience was of significant relevance to the international community.

48. India had a large number of scheduled castes and tribes whose members, for historical reasons, had been identified as socially disadvantaged. Under the Indian Constitution, however, they had the right to be represented in the decision-making machinery of the State, on Government bodies and in public-sector employment. The fundamental rights of the minorities of India were also enshrined in the Constitution, including the right to have their own educational institutions. The State ensured that there was no discrimination against minorities. Moreover, a National Commission for the Minorities had been established by an Act of Parliament to safeguard the rights granted to the minorities under the Constitution and in the legislation.

49. India had made significant progress in integrating women into development through legislation and administrative measures. The status of women had improved significantly over the past 20 years. The Government had sought to help women realize their full potential through training programmes and the creation of new economic activities.

50. In 1977 and 1978, India had established the largest programme in the world for the holistic development of the child. That programme was known as the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS).

51. The right to development was a fundamental right. A society that aimed at protecting the rights of individuals, their dignity and freedom must also promote their economic well-being. That was why India had successfully

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(Mr. Abdullah, India)

implemented, since its independence, one of the largest affirmative action programmes in the world. That success had been highlighted in the 1993 Report on the World Social Situation. Attaching conditionalities to aid impinged on the sovereignty of States and politicizing the system of aid in general defeated the common objectives of all, namely, fighting want, hunger, disease and illiteracy.

52. The primary lesson that India had learned in its fight against poverty was that poverty was a complex problem for which there was no single solution. In India, the successful poverty eradication programmes were those that were self-sustaining. The Government took a lead role in poverty alleviation programmes, which consisted of initiating legislation for land reform, decentralizing power, guaranteeing the participation of women and socially vulnerable groups and providing the financial resources needed for anti-poverty programmes. In general, human development was the ultimate goal of the Eighth Plan of India. With that objective in mind, the Government had identified the following measures: employment generation, population control, literacy, education, health, drinking-water supply and food. Since it knew by experience that such programmes were cost-effective only with the participation of the people, the Government planned to involve communities in the implementation of the Eighth Five-Year Plan. It had noticed that successful models of people's institutions were those that were managed by the beneficiaries, were accountable to the community, were self-sustaining, interacted with other organizations in the area and generally tended to increase the integration of various segments of society. The Government, for its part, facilitated the involvement of people in developmental activities by creating the right type of infrastructure, especially in rural areas.

53. Concerning the preparations for the World Summit for Social Development, in which India intended to participate actively, certain basic concerns of developing countries needed to be stressed, in particular the need for genuine cooperation among countries. In that connection, external conditionalities were counterproductive. Similarly, it was important for developing countries not to become victims of increasingly protectionist policies. The international community must facilitate the transfer of technology and resources to developing countries on concessional terms.

54. The International Year of the Family and the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons provided ample opportunities for Member States to share experiences in those areas. The allocation of appropriate resources towards programmes for disabled persons was particularly necessary. South Asia had benefited in that regard from regional cooperation and from the assistance of non-governmental organizations. As the twentieth century drew to a close and the world stood on the threshold of a new millennium, the time had come to start afresh. The year of the World Summit, 1995, should mark such a beginning.

55. Mrs. ENKHTSETSEG (Mongolia) said that despite changes in the world political climate, the socio-economic situation of the world remained a cause for concern as indicated by the 1993 Report on the World Social Situation and the report of the Secretary-General on the Implementation of the Guiding Principles for Developmental Social Welfare Policies and Programmes in the Near

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Future (A/48/56). Moreover, the world was facing new security threats. There could be no peace and security without development. It was now acknowledged that development was not limited to economic growth but encompassed also political, social and ecological aspects and that the true measure of development was the well-being of people. That was why Mongolia had co-sponsored General Assembly resolution 47/92 on the convening of a World Summit for Social Development.

56. Her delegation welcomed the fact that the regional commissions were already actively engaged in preparations for that Summit. Her Government fully endorsed the multisectoral strategy to the year 2000 and beyond adopted by ESCAP in 1992 with the aim of improving the economic and social life of the people of the region through the eradication of poverty, equitable distribution of resources and popular participation. It attached great importance to the two ministerial conferences - one on women and development and the other in preparation for the World Summit - to be held in the Asia-Pacific region during 1994, and it intended to take an active part in them. Her Government welcomed the decision of the Preparatory Committee to establish national committees in each country composed of representatives of official agencies and non-governmental organizations.

57. The transition to a market economy was not without serious social problems from which vulnerable groups, especially the disabled, were the first to suffer. Although it was true that the responsibility for designing and executing programmes for the disabled lay first and foremost with the Government, Mongolia was still in need of advice and technical assistance from the donor community, and was willing to cooperate with it in improving the living standard of its disabled people.

58. Mongolia gave its full support to the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities. It hoped that the momentum gained during the United Nations Decade for Disabled Persons would be maintained and would result in practical actions with a view to building a society for all.

59. Mr. FARHADI (Afghanistan) said that his delegation commended the achievements of the Preparatory Committee for the World Summit for Social Development. His delegation noted with satisfaction that non-governmental organizations had been involved in those preparations, which was especially encouraging. In many cases, non-governmental organizations were particularly well-informed on the situation in developing countries. Often, they were the real experts on the subject, especially on the least developed countries. With regard to the World Summit, he hoped that a mechanism would be established to ensure effective follow-up. The Copenhagen Summit must not result in a declaration that was destined to be ignored.

60. In his opinion, the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities did not truly reflect the breadth of the problems faced in that area, especially in the least developed countries. His delegation intended to propose some changes at the appropriate time.

61. From what some delegations had said regarding the United Nations Decade for Disabled Persons launched in 1982, it would seem that nothing had really been

(Mr. Farhadi, Afghanistan)

accomplished. He did not share that view: what had occurred during that Decade, most unfortunately, was an increase in the number of disabled persons in the world, particularly in Afghanistan. In that country, bombing and anti-personnel mines had created conditions far worse than those experienced in many European countries at the end of the Second World War. In Afghanistan, unexploded mines, which were veritable time bombs, were machines for producing disabilities and mutilations. The situation was even more serious in Afghanistan because medical treatment was practically non-existent and persons suffering from a disability were mired in absolute poverty because villages had been bombed and the destruction of the family environment had deprived them of their natural source of protection. Although the conflict had ended, reconstruction was very difficult. The situation was disastrous, not only from a physical and ecological standpoint, but from a psychological point of view. Women in particular, who had lost children or husbands, felt psychologically disabled, and disabled children needed special care.

62. In the adoption of instruments concerning the rights of children or the disabled, the special needs of the least developed countries must be taken into account. Such countries as Cambodia, Angola or Afghanistan, which had been devastated by conflicts, belonged to that group. Furthermore, any agenda for development must consider the care to be provided to persons disabled from mine explosions. In general, he felt that the developed countries were totally unaware of the situation in countries like Afghanistan. It also seemed that rules formulated in international forums - the Standard Rules for the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities, for example - applied more to developed countries than to countries like Afghanistan or Cambodia. Any draft resolution on that issue should mention financial assistance to be provided to the least developed countries, which must meet the immense needs of a large disabled population.

63. At a previous meeting, he had listened attentively to the comments of the representative of Denmark, who had said that donor countries were ready to provide assistance for disabled persons, but that there had been no interest in the offer. He assured him that Afghanistan would be very happy to benefit from such assistance.

64. Mrs. FERTEKLIGIL (Turkey) drew attention to the social problems experienced by the international community and emphasized the correlation between economic and social development and peace and security. Persistent economic imbalances and social regression could create political tensions that threatened peace and stability. In that regard, appropriate mechanisms must be established and effective action undertaken in order to meet the challenges being faced at the end of the twentieth century, in terms of poverty, unemployment and social and economic inequality.

65. Economic growth by itself could not, however, guarantee sustainable development and must be backed up by strategies, policies and rules encouraging social integration, particularly with respect to disadvantaged groups. In that context, Turkey welcomed the convening of a World Summit for Social Development. She reiterated her country's support for the Summit and said she was convinced that it would impart new momentum to social development.

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66. Turkey hoped that the Summit would result in concrete actions that would make it possible to reverse current negative trends and to fill in the widening gap between rich and poor. She emphasized that a great deal of creativity and boldness would be needed to arrive at decisions that would be commensurate with the heightened expectations attaching to the three core issues which the Summit would address, namely, enhancement of social integration, alleviation and reduction of poverty and expansion of productive employment. Turkey was determined to contribute actively to the success of preparations for the Summit and of the Summit itself.

67. She also stressed the appropriateness of creating a trust fund for the Summit, which would facilitate both the holding of the Summit and the participation of the least developed countries.

68. As a country which found itself in the midst of social change, Turkey was endeavouring to adopt measures that would improve the quality of life of its population by guaranteeing equal opportunities for social advancement, employment and access to health services. To that end, Turkey was engaged in mobilizing the resources necessary for economic growth that would be both sustainable and rational in social and ecological terms. The Turkish authorities were giving considerable attention to social integration and were concentrating their efforts, inter alia, on the family as a basic unit of society, youth, the elderly and women. Policies and programmes had also been formulated for the integration of disabled people into society.

69. In accordance with its social policy, Turkey supported all the programmes of action initiated by the United Nations with a view to enhancing social integration, particularly of the more disadvantaged groups. In that connection, Turkey welcomed the observance in 1994 of the International Year of the Family. She also welcomed such initiatives as the International Plan of Action on Ageing, the draft Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities and the observance of the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty.

70. Turkey noted the importance of the World Conference on Human Rights, held in Vienna in 1993, the observance of the International Year of the Family and the holding of the International Conference on Population and Development, which would take place during 1994, and the World Summit for Social Development and the Fourth World Conference on Women, to take place in 1995. Those events would make it possible to maintain a spirit of solidarity and to achieve the goals which the international community had set for itself in the field of social development.

71. Mrs. RAOELINA (Madagascar) said that the economic crisis affecting a large part of the world was taking a very high social and human toll, and for that reason the core issues to be addressed during the World Summit for Social Development, namely, the efforts to combat marginalization in all its forms, poverty, and unemployment and underemployment, were particularly relevant. Madagascar welcomed the progress made in the work of the Preparatory Committee for the Summit.

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(Mrs. Raoelina, Madagascar)

72. Despite its return to democracy and its reorientation towards a market economy, Madagascar was experiencing an economic and social crisis. Nevertheless, it had taken an active part in combating poverty and in efforts to improve the living conditions of its citizens. Special mention should be made of the SECALINE pilot project for food security and improved diet, which had been implemented in two disadvantaged regions in the centre and south of the country and served more than 2 million people. That project, which focused on improving the diet of malnourished children and at the same time sought to provide employment for some of the poorest people, was intended to serve as a foundation for a true national food-security strategy. The project was the product of a collaborative effort between the Government of Madagascar, the World Bank, Japan, UNICEF and non-governmental organizations. The results would be evaluated and monitored regularly by the donors.

73. Afflicted with poverty and illiteracy, lagging in the health field and facing the serious problem of external debt, Madagascar nevertheless remained a country well-endowed with natural resources, population and the good will of other nations and the international community. In an interdependent world, international cooperation and solidarity were indispensable.

74. The concept of social development was founded on the basic idea that a country's security could also be measured by the degree of its economic development and by progress made by it in improving the living conditions of its citizens. Social development also aimed to "humanize" the logic of the market by focusing economic development on the human being. It emphasized the essential solidarity among the nations of the South, buffeted by the same economic disasters, and between the developing nations of the South and the rich nations of the North, which themselves were passing through a period of recession. The joint struggle against poverty, marginalization and unemployment went hand in hand with a need for greater justice in international economic and financial relations and in people's living conditions.

75. Madagascar believed that the questions to be discussed during the World Summit and the underlying issues at stake were of vital importance and were worthy of at least the beginnings of a response from the international community. She hoped that those questions would not be overshadowed by the pressing concerns of that moment.

76. Ms. Al-Hamami (Yemen), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

77. Mrs. MBIMBI (Angola) said that the human and social development situation was nowhere so serious as in Africa, where productivity had continued to decline by an average of 1.5 per cent per year while increasing by an average of 1.2 per cent per year in the Western countries. The result had been a growing impoverishment of the population, over half of which lived under the poverty line. The situation had deteriorated particularly in social investment, especially in education, nutrition, health and housing. The infant mortality rate in Africa was 10 times higher than in the industrialized countries. The average African was poorer today than in 1981. More than 60 per cent of adults were illiterate. The socio-economic crisis was made worse by natural disasters and the lack of adequate economic infrastructures, to say nothing of the

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(Mrs. Mbimbi, Angola)

conflicts that had been responsible for 6 million refugees and 12 million displaced persons, the majority of them women and children.

78. In his introductory statement, the Chief of the Development Analysis Branch, Mr. Uswatte-Aratchi, had cited Angola as an example of a country where the Government had failed to intervene in the field of social development. Her delegation considered that to be a very unfortunate assessment. Everyone was aware that social development was intrinsically linked to peace and security. Everyone was also aware that Angola was at war, a war in which children, the ageing and women were the main victims. That war had already taken the lives of more than 120,000 people since its resumption by UNITA in September 1992. It might be asked whether it was possible for a Government to intervene in the field of social development in such circumstances.

79. Her delegation attached great importance to the international conferences scheduled for the next few years, in particular the World Summit for Social Development, which the Government of Denmark had offered to host in March 1995. She noted in that connection that the conceptual bases for the Summit were in the Charter of the United Nations, which stated in Article 55 that the United Nations should promote "higher standards of living, full employment, and conditions of economic and social progress and development".

80. Mr. OJHA (Nepal) emphasized the need for a holistic approach to social problems, given the fact that social, economic and demographic aspects of development were interlinked. He noted with satisfaction that the human being and the family were the focus of attention in all development strategies devised by the United Nations and the international community.

81. His delegation endorsed the core issues spelled out in General Assembly resolution 47/92 on the convening of a World Summit for Social Development. The resolution called for particular attention to be given to the needs of the least developed countries in combating poverty, unemployment and social and environmental degradation. Nepal, as a least developed country, welcomed that initiative.

82. Given the changes in the world situation since the late 1980s and the deterioration in social problems such as poverty, disease, unemployment and illiteracy, the three core issues on which the World Summit would be focusing its deliberations - enhancement of social integration, particularly of the most disadvantaged groups, alleviation and reduction of poverty and expansion of productive employment - were particularly relevant. In that context, the role of the non-governmental organizations should be strengthened at the grass-roots level and the private sector should be encouraged to participate in the development of the social sector.

83. His delegation welcomed the inclusion of a chapter on the rights of disabled persons in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights in June 1993, which called upon the General Assembly to adopt the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities. It also looked forward to participating in the forthcoming International Conference on Population and Development in 1994 as well as the Fourth World Conference on Women to be held in 1995, two meetings

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(Mr. Ojha, Nepal)

which would be taking up the major social issues of the day. There was a need to devise integrated development strategies and a suitable mechanism at both the national and international levels for fostering international cooperation. He supported the organizational changes in the United Nations Secretariat in the social sector.

84. In Nepal, as part of the process of consolidating and institutionalizing democracy, which had been restored in 1990, social policies had been adopted giving priority to drinking water, health care, education and rural development. A large portion of the annual budget was allocated to improving the living conditions of the rural poor and to the active participation of women in the development process. Given the goals involved, namely political freedom, economic liberalization and the social uplifting of the rural poor, special attention was given to the promotion of social integration, poverty alleviation and the introduction of employment for youth.

85. The Government of Nepal was making plans to celebrate the International Year of the Family in 1994. As a member State of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), it was implementing various social sector programmes under the Integrated Programme of Action. In the eighth annual development plan, priority had been given to the education of girls.

86. Socio-economic development depended largely on the practice of more liberal international economic policies, North-South dialogue and South-South cooperation; it also required better international understanding and cooperation.

87. Mr. AL-TAEE (Oman) said that the family should be the basis for development and welcomed the interest shown by the international community in social and family issues. He drew attention to a UNICEF report entitled "Progress of Nations" published in September 1993, which stated that Oman was in first place among the countries of the Middle East and North Africa, and in second place at the world level, with regard to the drop in the infant mortality rate among children under five years of age.

88. Oman gave priority in its development programmes to the training of young people in order to enable them to participate effectively in the development process and in building a new world order on the basis of United Nations principles.

89. Oman also attached great importance to the ageing, applying the noble teachings of Islam and the fundamental principles of Arab civilization, which recommended respect for the ageing. Omani society and families venerated the ageing for their skills and the service they had rendered; as for the Government of Oman, it was convinced that the ageing were entitled to lead a decent life after their retirement. It therefore made every effort to meet physical and psychological needs of the ageing through a social security system aimed at improving their living conditions and guaranteeing an equitable distribution of the advantages of development among all the members of society.

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(Mr. Al-Taee, Oman)

90. The human being was the main target of development. It was therefore essential to care for disabled persons and to focus on their rehabilitation thus enabling them to participate in the development process. In that regard, Oman had launched training, orientation and job programmes for disabled persons, while there were fixed quotas under Omani legislation for the employment of disabled persons. The competent public authorities did their utmost to ensure participation in cultural, social and sporting activities for the disabled. Disabled persons with no vocational training and the fully disabled jobless were covered by social security.

91. Mrs. AL-ALAWI (Bahrain) said that development aims could not be achieved unless social measures were taken. Accordingly, the social and economic plans implemented by Bahrain were based on fundamental principles, such as the importance of supplementary activities carried out by all sectors engaged in social and economic development work. Those plans involved all social groups, particularly youth, the disabled and the elderly.

92. Bahrain paid particular attention to the elderly on the basis that they had devoted a considerable effort to establishing the rules and principles on which society was built. In turn, therefore, society should take the utmost care of the elderly, address itself to solving their problems and provide for their needs in accordance with the noble precepts of Islam and humanitarian principles.

93. The General Assembly decision to make 1994 the International Year of the Family provided a good opportunity for increasing awareness in that area. Bahrain gave particular attention to the family, which was the nucleus of society; on that aspect, it applied the principles of the Shariah, which governed all aspects of family life. In addition, Bahrain had taken all steps to safeguard the welfare and cohesion of the family, thereby enabling it to contribute to the development of society and providing it with social and economic stability and security.

94. The General Assembly's adoption of resolution 47/92 on the convening of a world summit for social development in early 1995 clearly demonstrated the interest and concerns of the international community on that subject. Bahrain very much hoped that the summit would produce an agreement related to achieving the aims set forth in article 55 of the Charter.

95. Mr. Kukan (Slovakia) resumed the Chair.

96. Mrs. OLSZOWSKI (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)) said that the Third Committee discussions revealed a general recognition of the world-wide accentuation of social problems and the need to rethink development, which, according to the Director-General of UNESCO, Federico Mayor, required a global struggle against all the forms of exclusion - beginning with poverty - by developing human resources and productive employment.

(Mrs. Olszowski, UNESCO)

97. By intending to focus debate at the World Summit for Social Development on the three core issues of social cohesion, poverty and employment, the international community had acknowledged the need for policies which integrated political, economic, social and environmental factors and placed people directly at the centre of development. In that respect, the recent high segment of the Economic and Social Council had demonstrated a wide degree of consensus in the analysis and prognosis of the current world situation. It also believed that all countries needed a new direction in their social policies.

98. One question which arose was whether the United Nations system could help to devise an integrated approach to policy-making and to build consensus on that matter without impinging on national prerogatives.

99. UNESCO planned to contribute to the aims of the World Summit, to a more informed discourse on social policies and to a conceptual and methodological framework in that area within the United Nations system. The fruits of the two high-level commissions - the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century, chaired by Mr. Jacques Delors, and the World Commission on Culture and Development, presided over by Mr. Pérez de Cuéllar - would be one of its contributions to the preparatory process of the Summit and the ensuing activities. The International Commission on Education focused on the goal of instilling modern societies with values such as tolerance, respect and understanding of cultural differences, which were crucial to building a more just world and achieving social integration. The Commission was also concerned with problems of marginalization and with the participation of individuals and groups in a pluralist society where work would occupy an increasingly less important part of individual life. The World Commission on Culture regarded culture, in its widest sense, as both the major means to development and as its ultimate goal. Culture had become a prerequisite for peace and security; the Commission was therefore entrusted with an unprecedented task of critical importance, namely the comprehensive and coordinated study on a world scale of the relationship between culture and development.

100. UNESCO's programme for the next biennium (1994-1995) consisted of other initiatives aimed at strengthening multilateral cooperation in the area of social development. The Social Science Programme on the Management of Social Transformation (MOST) was to be approved by the General Conference of UNESCO, which was currently in session in Paris. The research undertaken in the context of that Programme should provide policy makers with the knowledge necessary for decision-making.

101. Another interdisciplinary and inter-agency cooperation project entitled "Environment and population education, and information for human development" was also included in the 1994-1995 Programme and reinforced the activities undertaken by UNESCO, in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme, the World Bank, the United Nations Children's Fund and the United Nations Population Fund, in the context of Education for All by the Year 2000. UNESCO believed that the promotion of that goal was a precondition for achieving development which was "sustainable, equitable and people-centred", and for achieving "peace based on human rights, fundamental freedoms and democracy".

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(Mrs. Olszowski, UNESCO)

102. UNESCO's educational programmes were designed to equalize opportunities for disabled persons, another issue which had been the focus of the Committee's debates on the eve of the adoption of the standard rules in that regard. The day of 3 December, proclaimed by the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly as the International Day of Disabled Persons, was to be celebrated at UNESCO in Paris. UNESCO would also celebrate the International Year of the Family, to which preparation it had contributed.

103. On issues such as the relationship between State and civilian society, urban marginality and the social integration of marginalized groups, and population trends and migrations, UNESCO was, within its field of competence, paying particular attention to the specific problems related to the participation of youth and women in development. UNESCO's promotional activities for human rights and democracy were also linked to development, those three concepts being interdependent. Furthermore, science and communication were contributing to the transfer of knowledge and technology, to national capacity-building and to other important components of sustainable human development.

104. Finally, she indicated to the Committee members that the undertakings proposed by UNESCO in connection with the preparations for the World Summit, particularly in the field of information, were the subject of an information note which was at their disposal.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS
General Assembly
FORTY-EIGHTH SESSION
Official Records

THIRD COMMITTEE
17th meeting
held on
Monday, 25 October 1993
at 3 p.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 17th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. KUKAN (Slovakia)

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AGENDA ITEM 109: SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE WORLD SOCIAL SITUATION AND TO YOUTH, AGEING, DISABLED PERSONS AND THE FAMILY (continued)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 109: SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE WORLD SOCIAL SITUATION AND TO YOUTH, AGEING, DISABLED PERSONS AND THE FAMILY (*continued*) (A/48/3 (chap. VII.D), A/48/24, A/48/56-E/1993/6, A/48/207, A/48/289, A/48/291, A/48/293, A/48/359, A/48/462, A/48/476, A/48/484; E/1993/50/Rev.1; A/C.3/48/L.2, L.3, L.4)

1. Mr. AL-MEHAIRBI (United Arab Emirates) said that the international political climate was now favourable to the strengthening of social and economic development and international cooperation with a view to finding solutions to the problems arising from wars and conflicts as well as natural disasters. The United Arab Emirates spared no effort to provide the necessary physical and moral assistance to countries affected by such conflicts and disasters. Its policy of sound development was aimed at achieving stability and equitable growth in order to provide humanitarian, social, education and health services to all, since the human element constituted the true strength and capital of a country.

2. With respect to social services, his country was guided by the premise that the family was the basic unit of society. It had established social guidance centres and ministerial committees on the family to promote family responsibility, the protection of children, the proper upbringing of youth and the prevention of delinquency. It had also established centres for the care and rehabilitation of the disabled and homes and clubs for the elderly. Regarding education, he said that the number of students at all levels of education had increased, and centres had been established for applied scientific research. Centres and programmes had also been established for the eradication of illiteracy and for adult education. In the field of health, hospitals, clinics and child care centres had been built, and health awareness programmes were being implemented. Finally, his country devoted great attention to programmes aimed at raising general cultural and social levels and promoting youth training for sports, as well as at inculcating humanitarian principles in accordance with the true Islamic religion and moral values.

3. His country commended the work accomplished by the United Nations in strengthening social and economic development. His delegation pinned great hopes on the 1995 World Summit for Social Development and the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development. Furthermore, his country looked forward to participating in the International Year of the Family and hoped that 1994 would see the adoption of a long-term strategy in support of the family. The Member States were urged to make positive and effective contributions to enable the United Nations to fulfil its obligations in order to achieve progress and well-being for all humanity.

4. Mr. ABDELLAH (Tunisia), speaking on behalf of the member States of the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU), said that AMU shared many of the principal goals linked to development, namely the promotion of social justice, the protection of vulnerable groups, the integration of youth into social projects and the fight against crime. The high incidence of malnutrition, illiteracy and poverty in the developing countries, reflected in the *1993 Report on the World Social Situation*, were due in part to the dichotomy between long-term development

(Mr. Abdellah, Tunisia)

objectives and the effects of sudden structural adjustment programmes, and to a lack of measures to benefit the most disadvantaged segments of society. Indebtedness, excessive debt servicing and depressed commodity prices had also hampered the success of development strategies. A global approach was needed to resolve problems of social development. In that connection, AMU commended the efforts of the international community to promote development policies and urged the United Nations and its specialized agencies to provide additional support in implementing social policies.

5. The themes of the World Summit for Social Development in 1995, which included alleviation of poverty, expansion of productive employment and social integration formed the basis for integrated action to advance social development. The AMU welcomed the idea of holding the Summit at a time when countries were confronted with difficulties created by transition to democracy and structural adjustment programmes.

6. The member States of the Arab Maghreb Union attached great importance to the family unit and supported the recommendations adopted at the United Nations Africa and Western Asia Preparatory Meeting for the International Year of the Family. Those recommendations stressed the need to promote respect for individual freedoms and rights, address the particular problems of rural and poor families, eliminate discrimination against migrant families and promote social equality. The World Summit for Social Development would provide an excellent opportunity to discuss social issues which had a direct impact on international peace and security.

7. Mr. OULD MOHAMED MAHMOUD (Mauritania) said that a review of the situation of youth in the world today was an appropriate time to evaluate the progress made since the General Assembly adopted the guidelines for further planning and suitable follow-up in the field of youth in 1985 (resolution 40/14). In fact, the situation of youth in the world continued to be of great concern and, in some respects, had deteriorated. Young people were an essential asset for the future of any society and their needs and rights, specifically in the areas of education, training, health and employment, had not been sufficiently guaranteed.

8. In the developing countries, which were experiencing great economic difficulties, the situation was particularly deplorable and had generated such social ills as juvenile delinquency, corruption and drug addiction. There had been a breakdown in the traditional family structure and religious faith, accompanied by problems of hunger, sickness, illiteracy and alarming levels of unemployment. The situation of the youth in rural areas was critical. In urban areas, many young people were tempted by harmful practices that were prohibited by Islam and were forced into marginalization. The new world order and preventive diplomacy, defined by the Secretary-General in his Agenda for Peace, would be judiciously implemented by a policy that ensured the rights and met the needs of young people. The tenth anniversary of the International Youth Year in 1995 would provide an excellent opportunity for the international community to renew its commitments to future generations. The General Assembly, in its resolution 45/103 of 14 December 1990, had decided to devote a plenary meeting at its fiftieth session to youth questions. Given the new challenges, his

(Mr. Ould Mohamed Mahmoud, Mauritania)

delegation wished to suggest that the United Nations consider convening a second world youth congress at that time, which would help to identify appropriate solutions to the very serious problems facing young generations throughout the world. The cost of convening such a conference could be reduced if it were to coincide with activities planned for the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. The convening of such a conference would considerably enrich that celebration and demonstrate the deep-felt concern of the United Nations for the problems of youth.

9. Ms. YIN YIN MINT (Myanmar) welcomed the decision to convene the World Summit for Social Development in 1995. There was a great need to analyse in depth the economic problems of the developing countries and their impact on social development. As recognized by the World Conference on Human Rights, extreme poverty was a major factor inhibiting full enjoyment of human rights. Her delegation hoped that the World Summit for Social Development would elaborate guidelines for Governments so that they could address social issues more effectively.

10. As indicated the 1993 Report on the World Social Situation, her Government's expenditure on education and health services had exceeded 20 per cent of total expenditures at the beginning of the 1990s. Her Government was formulating policies and programmes to alleviate hunger, improve health conditions and provide education and better housing to both urban and rural populations. Bearing in mind that economic progress would contribute to the social well-being of the people, efforts were being made to ensure a smooth transition from a centrally planned economy to a market economy. Fully conscious of the need to provide shelter, especially for the poorest segments of society, her Government was setting up new satellite towns. Those projects were substantially subsidized and had helped to ease overcrowding in the cities.

11. Efforts were being made to improve the quality of life of the various racial groups in the border areas and bring needed infrastructure to remote and mountainous areas. The development programme for border areas and ethnic groups had had a great impact on the elimination of illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs in those areas. One of the reasons for their backwardness, apart from the inaccessible terrain, was that they had been controlled by armed insurgent groups who lived on drug trafficking. To date, 10 of those armed groups had been apprehended.

12. International support would greatly enhance Myanmar's efforts to achieve sustainable development. In that regard, her delegation firmly supported the World Summit for Social Development as a golden opportunity for developed and developing countries to work together to formulate comprehensive strategies to that end. Finally, her delegation welcomed the proclamation of 1994 as the International Year of the Family, as a meaningful opportunity to reaffirm the position of the family as the basic unit of society.

13. Mrs. ROMULUS (Haiti) said that many decisions taken by the General Assembly in recent years had rightly focused on the strengthening of activities associated with the social sector. Social policy issues had been discussed at the Vienna Conference on Human Rights, would be dealt with at the Population and Development Conference in 1994 and, most intensively, at the World Summit for

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(Mrs. Romulus, Haiti)

Social Development to be held at Copenhagen in 1995. And yet, despite remarkable advances in social development, extreme poverty, oppression and exploitation had not disappeared. Had the priority truly been placed on the essential needs of people, the task would be almost complete. That observation should inspire redoubled efforts to implement a new international system of ethics based on the autonomy of the individual and the respect for human rights.

14. It had been demonstrated that bad economic policy and unfavourable international conditions could plunge whole populations into poverty. Low productivity, inflation and unemployment had created an impoverished class that had previously not existed. The world economic crisis, which had led Governments world wide to reduce spending, constituted a major obstacle to the reduction or elimination of poverty.

15. Although the new world order was freer it was also less stable. The wars, terrorism, and atrocities that had erupted after the replacement or dismantling of certain regimes were truly alarming.

16. In the view of Haiti, health and education should be the priorities of the World Summit for Social Development. Firstly, all peoples, however poor, should have the right to preventive care and medical treatment. Secondly, in a world where the economies of rich countries could not easily afford workers' training with a view to future employment, and in which investment in education in poorer countries had radically declined, the status of education was troubling. Economic obstacles and political difficulties must not stand in the way of education because only education could lead to participation in economic and social life and the strengthening of the democratic process.

17. Mr. MUSUKA (Zambia) said that questions of social development, hitherto sidelined by the imperatives of the cold war period, were slowly beginning to assume their rightful place on the global agenda. Although in past years many advances had been made in the social sector, in such areas as child immunization, health care and education, in many developing countries the social situation still remained precarious, as shown by high levels of poverty and accompanying high infant mortality rates.

18. Zambia was currently undergoing severe economic difficulties resulting from structural adjustment measures designed to revitalize the social and economic infrastructure, but which had also increased the incidence of poverty. A social action programme had been introduced to redress the situation; its projects, targeting vulnerable segments of society covered such areas as health and nutrition, education, water and sanitation, urban and rural roads, market development, transport, women in development, employment generation through public works projects, and development in small-scale industries.

19. Given current conditions in Zambia, his delegation felt that the promotion of integrated economic and social policies should be a top priority of the World Summit for Social Development. Furthermore, preparatory work for the Summit must take a realistic view of the practical consequences of implementing

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(Mr. Musuka, Zambia)

conclusions and recommendations. Specific actions to promote cooperation in social development should be formulated, taking into account the interdependence between the success of national efforts and a supportive international economic environment.

20. At the close of the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons, numerous obstacles still stood in the way of their full participation in society. It was, however, encouraging to note that for the first time the rights of disabled people had been incorporated into the general human rights document of the Vienna World Conference on Human Rights, which clearly stated that no person should be denied the enjoyment of any human right on the basis of a disability. In Zambia, the Ministry of Community Development had conducted many programmes aimed at protecting the rights of the disabled, including the establishment of institutions offering education to disabled children and care for the blind. Recently a special fund had been created to assist those blind people who wished to return to their native villages.

21. Given the continued decline in the socio-economic situation in Zambia, it had become increasingly difficult for young people to enter the job market. Evidence showed that education alone was no guarantee of obtaining employment. The Government had consequently embarked on a basic skills development programme in both primary and secondary schools. The key to future development was the stimulation of human resources and the generation of productive employment. The Government, in cooperation with NGOs, had also inaugurated programmes to provide basic training to street children as a step towards their rehabilitation and integration into society.

22. His delegation applauded the decision to observe the International Year of the Family in 1994, and hoped that it would provide the occasion for policy dialogue on the current and emerging challenges of family life, and in particular, on the need for Governments to develop family-oriented policies that would eliminate difficulties experienced by households headed by women. His delegation hoped that the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women would play a significant role in the International Year of the Family. Finally, Zambia had instituted a national preparatory coordinating committee under its Ministry of Community Development and Social Services to make preparations, in conjunction with NGOs, for the observance of the International Year of the Family.

23. Mr. AKPLOGAN (Benin) stated that development would require the elimination of the current economic order, in which two thirds of the human race could not meet their basic needs, including the millions in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, who existed in a state of almost absolute poverty. Regrettably, the world economic crisis had been accompanied by a general tendency to reduce the role of the State in social affairs. Stagnation and economic decline had led many developing African countries to adopt structural adjustment programmes, which had considerably restricted policies and programmes in the social sector in order to service a large official debt. It was imperative to reverse that trend, and to rethink development priorities so as to respond to genuine need in the areas of health, nutrition, education and so on. Social development must take place within the context of sustained, balanced development in which people were the priority.

(Mr. Akplogan, Benin)

24. Benin applauded the decision by the General Assembly to convoke a World Summit for Social Development and agreed that it should focus on the following points: the strengthening of social integration, in particular for the more disadvantaged and marginalized groups; the reduction of poverty; the expansion of productive employment, and the strengthening of the role of the United Nations in the field of social development. In the view of Benin, the Summit should elaborate a plan of action aimed at devising an integrated programme for social development. It agreed that in order to achieve the degree of success of the World Conference on Human Rights at Vienna, the World Summit for Social Development must be accorded the same financial facilities and given the same measure of publicity.

25. As the Secretary-General had indicated in his report on the implementation of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons (A/48/462), the expectations of the Decade of Disabled Persons had not been fully realized. Despite some progress in certain developing countries with regard to health and rehabilitation, the number of disabled persons had grown over the course of the Decade, particularly in those regions stricken by war, drought or famine. In Benin, within the framework of the implementation of its national programme related to the World Programme of Action, several activities, however modest, had been carried out on behalf of disabled persons. The task before the international community was to continue to raise consciousness with regard to the plight of disabled persons, so as to take steps towards the creation of a society where disabled persons could feel that they fully belonged.

26. Based on its conviction that development was closely linked to the well-being of women, children and the ageing, the Government of Benin was making vigorous preparations for the International Year of the Family in 1994. It also intended to contribute to the preparatory work of the World Conference on Women to take place in Beijing in 1995. It was the hope of his country that those significant occasions would leave an imprint in the history of humanity.

27. Ms. SEMAFUMU (Uganda) said that, notwithstanding the reduction in infant mortality and illiteracy as a result of technological progress, the prospects for improvements in living standards for the majority of the world's population remained bleak. Economic difficulties, caused by an inequitable international system, remained an impediment to investment in critical areas essential to social and economic improvement. Although it was now acknowledged that more attention needed to be paid to the negative social impact of economic reforms, current poverty alleviation programmes were still woefully inadequate. At the same time political conflict and ethnic tension continued to cause widespread suffering and the destruction of socio-economic infrastructure, and an alarming world-wide upsurge in crime had yet to be addressed by existing institutions and policies.

28. The 1993 Report on the World Social Situation, which provided a useful source of material, would be improved by a more rigorous methodology to facilitate analysis and policy recommendations.

29. Although the United Nations system conducted a vast array of social activities, the approach tended to be fragmented. While a sectoral approach focused attention on vulnerable groups to a degree that a holistic approach

(Ms. Semafumu, Uganda)

might not, it had not resulted in sustained action, which could be achieved only by mainstreaming specific concerns into overall policy formulation, implementation and evaluation. The net result was that the whole of the activities undertaken by the United Nations was less than the sum of its parts.

30. The 1995 World Summit for Social Development would provide an opportunity to adopt a more holistic approach to social development based on the three core issues of poverty alleviation, social integration and productive employment. All three should be accorded equal priority.

31. Her delegation welcomed the institutional changes affecting United Nations activities in the economic and social fields and hoped they would increase their effectiveness. Further decentralization meant that regional commissions would play an increasingly important role. In that connection, the social development programme of the Economic Commission for Africa, which was relatively weak, needed to be strengthened. The report on the World Summit for Social Development (A/48/476) confirmed that view.

32. She welcomed the completion of the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities, and supported the appointment of a special rapporteur as a component of the monitoring mechanism. She looked forward to the completion of the manual on the integration of disability issues into national planning and development projects. She supported the proposed upgrading of the Disabled Persons Unit within the Secretariat, but would appreciate information on any consequent redeployment of resources.

33. Her delegation welcomed proposals for an early assessment of the International Year of the Family. The role of the family in a changing environment remained topical. The extended family, still the basic unit of African societies, played an important role in terms of production, political organization and social insurance, a role which should be further analysed, taking into account the need for the extended family to be protected. It should also be recognized that the extended family system had negative aspects, such as nepotism and the diversion of public assets to private use. The focus provided during the International Year of the Family would enable African societies to preserve the positive aspects while mitigating the negative consequences.

34. She expressed confidence that the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations would provide a focus that would serve to bring the peoples of the world closer to the better standards of life in larger freedom envisaged by the founders of the Organization.

35. Mr. MARKER (Pakistan) said that the reports before the Committee gave cause for both concern and optimism in that chronic social and economic problems continued to dominate the social landscape in most developing countries, but that there was now sufficient experience to enable the world community to achieve the United Nations goal of promoting universal well-being.

36. It was clear that social development could not be dissociated from a country's political-economic matrix or from the external environment. Therefore a comprehensive policy, not a fragmented or piecemeal approach, was needed to promote sustained human development. The realization of that goal must be

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(Mr. Marker, Pakistan)

promoted at key decision-making levels inasmuch as poverty, unemployment and social backwardness were common problems, with both national and international dimensions. The redistribution of wealth, job creation and integration of all segments of society must be reflected in policies at the community, national and global levels.

37. For his Government social development was a priority objective. Greater resources would be allocated to promote access to education, decentralize the public sector, reduce population growth, carry out environmental and water supply projects, and implement a narcotics control plan. While modest, those goals, if attained, would result in far-reaching social change.

38. There was growing awareness in the developing countries of the need to integrate economic and social goals and policies, and to develop a new paradigm buttressed by appropriate international mechanisms, which would ensure sustainable development and the full participation of peoples in that process. The focus must be on poor people, who must be enabled to make a full contribution to society.

39. The slowdown in economic growth was cause for serious concern, since unless the economy improved, social development objectives would remain unfulfilled. Emphasis on the market, without more equitable distribution of national wealth, could exacerbate social and political problems and impede attainment of the full potential of human development. A balance must be struck between the play of market forces and government intervention, the overriding principle being to put people at the centre of development, in other words, to extend democratization beyond the limits of political representation.

40. United Nations endeavours to promote a global social revolution could succeed only if a plan of action accepted by a multilateral consensus was evolved to address problems of trade, finance, debt and technology transfer. The growth of even highly competitive developing countries was threatened by protectionism, while debt was a millstone oppressing the low-income countries. The growing phenomenon of economic migration, which was creating complex social problems in developed countries, could also be addressed by promoting growth and human well-being in developing countries.

41. Economic and technical progress had been uneven, unequal, and exploitative, creating a growing disparity between rich and poor. The challenge was to achieve growth with equity. Poverty obliged the destitute to degrade their lands merely to subsist, while much of the world's finite resources were being depleted due to unsustainable consumption and production in the developed countries, which were largely responsible for the current environmental crisis. Social development could not be assured if a majority of the world's population was engaged in servicing the wasteful lifestyles of a small minority.

42. The post-cold-war era had seen several regional conflicts with a massive toll in lives and suffering. Unless they could be ended, economic and social development in those regions would be difficult to realize. The United Nations had a vital role to play through its mediation, preventive diplomacy, peace-keeping and peacemaking functions.

(Mr. Marker, Pakistan)

43. His delegation noted with satisfaction the preparations under way for the World Summit for Social Development. The thematic approach, revolving around the core issues of social integration, poverty elimination and productive employment, would make it easier to secure firm commitments at the highest political level. Nevertheless, the Summit should not be seen as an end but as a beginning of development for the people.

44. Mr. ABARRY (Niger) said that the close connections between democracy, social progress, respect for human rights and development were more evident now than ever before. Social development could therefore not be envisaged without a society in which the individual was the focal point of all development efforts. He hoped that the World Summit for Social Development in 1995 would be an opportunity for the international community to give specific responses to the constant appeals of many of its members whose chances of acceding to genuine development were being eroded as time went by.

45. Convinced that a community approach was needed to deal with thorny problems such as poverty, unemployment and health and that the mobilization of the population was critical to development activities, his Government had launched a number of projects in cooperation with non-governmental organizations using the Niger's meagre resources to assist vulnerable groups. The United Nations could not only provide the support needed to ensure that the efforts were not in vain but should also coordinate and clarify the nature of the activities of different agencies in the field in order to ensure that in the long run the highly controversial side effects of structural adjustment programmes were corrected.

46. The drafting of a family code in the Niger had filled the legal void which had existed in that area in the past. The launching of the International Year of the Family would give the international community an opportunity to address the problems associated with the family. As the development of young people including their education and employment were crucial elements in his Government's policy it had established a number of programmes to improve the training, economic and social conditions of young people. However, those programmes had been seriously compromised by the combined effects of the economic crisis, drought and structural adjustment policies. The youth, as the future of the country, must enjoy the maximum support of the society in order to be able to face the future with full confidence. His country also accorded great importance to the recognition of the contribution of the disabled and had introduced legal provisions defining the framework for their social protection and established programmes designed to give them at least the same opportunities as able-bodied people in society. His Government also focused considerable attention on combating drought and desertification, which seriously hampered efforts to harness water resources and to attain food self-sufficiency - essential prerequisites for the well-being of the population.

47. Archbishop MARTINO (Observer for the Holy See) said that the Holy See welcomed the new comprehensive United Nations approach to the development process, the material and spiritual dimensions of which required the free participation of every human being. The problems discussed in the 1993 Report on the World Social Situation required careful and immediate action and pointed to the need for equity and solidarity. While efforts at improving the economic

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(Archbishop Martino, Observer, Holy See)

conditions of millions of people must be intensified, there was an obligation to provide all human beings with values and guidelines which could be combined with their material improvement to assist them in achieving a well-rounded development and a better quality of life.

48. He noted with satisfaction that the values proposed by the Pope and the Catholic Church to the young generations addressed the same needs as those cited in the report. In relation to ageing and disabled persons, the Catholic Church applauded all the gains made in longevity and in the elimination or cure of many diseases and urged that they be enhanced. In that connection, the international community should not miss the opportunity to rid the world of leprosy which, according to the World Health Organization, was now treatable and curable and could be eradicated at a cost of only $420 million over a period of six years. Society must give expression to its spiritual values and stop considering the care of the elderly and the impaired only in terms of financial costs.

49. The Pope had associated the whole Church with the United Nations in proclaiming 1994 as the International Year of the Family throughout the Catholic Church. The 1993 Report on the World Social Situation had touched on some problems of the family such as the high incidence of severe depression among young people due to the erosion of family cohesion and the fact that the increase in births out of wedlock partially reflected the diminished role of the family as an institution of economic survival. The Holy See intended to continue and intensify its efforts to safeguard the sacredness of the family.

50. Mr. OFFOR (Nigeria) said that the 1993 Report on the World Social Situation had failed to address the root causes of the distressing situation in developing countries. Future reports could perhaps examine the impact of factors such as the external debt crisis, debt-servicing obligations and trade barriers. The hopes raised at the end of the cold war that resources would be reallocated to deal with the causes of social tensions that might threaten the emerging democracies had been dashed. Consequently, those problems had not only increased but had also spread to all strata of society.

51. Africa was the hardest hit by social crises that were generally triggered by poverty due to a weak economic base and natural disasters. The World Summit for Social Development must address the underlying causes of social degradation and tension, particularly in the developing world, while both developed and developing countries would have to make a genuine commitment to tackling major issues such as the external indebtedness of developing countries whose development had continued to be hampered inter alia by increasing debt-servicing obligations and protectionism. With regard to protectionism, Nigeria hoped that the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations would be concluded by December of the current year and would take into account the interests of developing countries. The primary responsibility for improving the welfare of peoples lay with national Governments. Unfortunately, those Governments which had adopted structural adjustment programmes had been overwhelmed by problems. As Nigeria attached great importance to the place of young people in the socio-economic development of its society, it had set up a National Open Apprenticeship Scheme to help school leavers to engage in gainful self-employment.

52. Mr. AL-SAEID (Kuwait) said that Kuwaiti citizens enjoyed full social services all through their lives, including counselling, guidance and material assistance from government bodies and welfare associations. Social development assistance was also extended to numerous fraternal countries through various charity organizations involved in the care and rehabilitation of orphans.

53. His delegation had a keen interest in the 1995 World Summit for Social Development and would continue to participate in the preparatory meetings. Kuwait also devoted great attention to the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development and the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women.

54. Equal attention should be devoted to the social welfare of the elderly and youth. Kuwait provided full welfare services to the elderly and had established clubs and homes for them. Life expectancy in Kuwait was currently 72 years for men and 76 years for women, which was close to that of the advanced countries. Kuwait also allocated considerable resources to youth, who were the mainspring of development and the driving force behind the reconstruction of Kuwait's infrastructure, which had been destroyed by the nefarious Iraqi occupation.

55. Kuwait was among the foremost Governments in providing care and rehabilitation to the disabled. It was not enough merely to provide assistance to the disabled; their capabilities should be put to use and developed. Disabilities were not only matters of birth or accident: they could also result from criminal acts of barbarism, such as the Iraqi occupation and the torture practised by the Iraqi regime, which had caused numerous cases of disability among Kuwait civilians. The international community witnessed such criminal acts daily in various parts of the globe, such as Bosnia and Herzegovina. His delegation therefore urged it not to remain content with providing care and rehabilitation to the disabled; it should also fight against the corrupt and tyrannical regimes whose acts resulted in disabilities.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

56. The CHAIRMAN said that the question of an open-ended working group to consider follow-up to and implementation of the recommendations of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action on human rights was of the utmost importance and sensitivity. That meant that the group must be truly open and transparent, and undue delay in setting it up would be counterproductive. Informal consultations had revealed that the views of the Non-Aligned Movement were not acceptable to certain other delegations, so that for the time being he was unable to make any proposal that would command the support of a majority within the Committee.

57. Mr. WISNUMURTI (Indonesia) said that implementation of the recommendations in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action was of paramount importance to the Non-Aligned Movement, which had carefully considered the proposal to establish an open-ended working group. Given the sensitivity of the issue, consensus was essential. The Non-Aligned Movement proposed the following text for consideration:

> "The open-ended working group shall consider the follow-up to and implementation of the recommendations of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action including the consideration, as a matter of priority,

(Mr. Wisnumurti, Indonesia)

of the question of the establishment of a High Commissioner for Human Rights for the promotion and protection of human rights, as set out in paragraphs 17 and 18 of part II of the Declaration.

"The open-ended working group shall be transparent, be fully supported by conference services, including interpretation and documentation, and work with a view to achieving consensus."

He trusted that all delegations could support that proposal.

58. Ms. SEMAFUMU (Uganda) said that it would be helpful if the Chairman could indicate which elements in the non-aligned position were unacceptable to certain other delegations.

59. The CHAIRMAN said that he could not speak on behalf of other delegations, and suggested that further consultations should be held, bearing in mind that undue delay would imperil the objectives of establishing the open-ended working group.

The meeting rose at 6.05 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS
General Assembly
FORTY-EIGHTH SESSION
Official Records

THIRD COMMITTEE
18th meeting
held on
Thursday, 28 October 1993
at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 18th MEETING

Chairman: Ms. AL-HAMAMI (Yemen)
(Vice-Chairman)

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AGENDA ITEM 110: CRIME PREVENTION AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE

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In the absence of Mr. Kukan (Slovakia), Ms. Al-Hamami (Yemen), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 109: SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE WORLD SOCIAL SITUATION AND TO YOUTH, AGEING, DISABLED PERSONS AND THE FAMILY (continued) (A/48/3, chap. VII.D; A/48/24, A/48/56-E/1993/6, A/48/207, A/48/289, A/48/291, A/48/293, A/48/359, A/48/462, A/48/476, A/48/484; E/1993/50/Rev.1; A/C.3/48/L.2, L.3, L.4)

1. Mr. HAMZAH (Singapore) stated that a country's social progress was a measure of the extent to which human rights were respected. There was increasing agreement that social progress and quality of life were closely linked to the exercise of fundamental human rights. The latter encompassed such diverse spheres as social security, working conditions, family life, disadvantaged groups, basic health care, housing and education. It was the responsibility of States to ensure to their citizens an environment conducive to the exercise of those rights. At the World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna, the right to development had been reaffirmed as an inalienable and universal right. Nevertheless, as the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Development had indicated in his preface to the Report on the World Social Situation 1993 (E/1993/50), the economic crisis had prompted Governments to reduce social spending. At the same time, poverty, unemployment and the ageing of populations had highlighted the importance of social welfare policies.

2. Singapore had succeeded, through favourable social policies, in ensuring social justice and stability, which had in turn promoted economic growth. That experience nevertheless showed that such conditions were not attainable without an effective, efficient and honest Government that could ensure security, improved standard of living and social progress.

3. Owing to its unique historical circumstances and to its preoccupation with Asian values, Singapore had needed to fashion an approach of its own. Its policies were not based in welfarism, which in its view blunted the incentive to self-reliance and personal initiative. Its social welfare programmes gave assistance only to those truly in need. The Government of Singapore believed that its role was to guarantee to all citizens employment, housing, basic health care and education. Such were the preconditions for the enjoyment of basic human rights.

4. He drew attention to the text of his speech, which had been distributed to the members of the Third Committee, and which described in detail Singapore's national programmes in the spheres of education, health, housing, social security, family and social welfare. As the Foreign Minister of his country had remarked during the World Conference on Human Rights in June 1993, the enjoyment of human rights and social and economic development and the exercise of good government called for a balance between the rights of the individual and those of the community. Such an environment fostered respect for the rights of minorities and other disadvantaged groups.

(Mr. Hamzah, Singapore)

5. Social progress was not, however, possible without a strong, healthy economy: there could be no social "software" without economic "hardware".

6. Lastly, he acknowledged that while Singapore's social and economic policies had been successful, they were perhaps not applicable to other countries; each society had to find its own model for social progress.

7. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee had concluded its general debate on item 109 and invited it to turn to item 110.

AGENDA ITEM 110: CRIME PREVENTION AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE (A/48/332 and A/48/359)

8. Mr. GIACOMELLI (Director-General of the United Nations Office at Vienna) stated that, owing to the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations, responsibility for social development and the advancement of women had been transferred from Vienna to New York. The crime prevention and criminal justice programme had been kept in Vienna, under his supervision, and his introductory remarks would address its work and the global environment in which it performed.

9. The past year had underlined the signal importance of crime prevention and criminal justice for good government, sustained development, the transition to democracy and respect for human rights. It had also highlighted their direct relevance to other ongoing United Nations concerns such as peace-keeping and technical and humanitarian assistance.

10. Political and ethnic strife, the assassination of key officials and ordinary banditry had taken their toll in innocent victims, including a growing number of United Nations peace-keepers. Organized crime was undermining the quest for development and progress towards democracy. Countries of the third world and those in transition were particularly threatened, and deserved the solidarity and concrete assistance of the international community.

11. Organized crime was the most nefarious manifestation of crime, since, through related criminal activity, such as drug trafficking and corruption, it subverted national economies and easily eluded pursuit.

12. An integrated approach to the problem was thus a prime objective of the United Nations Office at Vienna. Such an approach called for close cooperation with the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch and the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP). The United Nations Office at Vienna had also taken into consideration the priorities set by the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, as well as the relevant initiatives adopted by the Economic and Social Council in resolutions 1993/27 through 1997/34.

13. A World Ministerial Conference on Organized Transnational Crime would therefore be held in Italy in 1994 to map out more effective national and international strategies for prevention and control. A conference on money laundering would be held, also in Italy, by the International Scientific and Professional Advisory Council (ISPAC), in cooperation with the Italian Government, under the auspices of the United Nations. Meetings of experts on

(Mr. Giacomelli)

other aspects of transnational crime, such as, for example, ecological crime, would be held during the year in Vienna.

14. Those activities would contribute to preparations for the Ninth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders to be held in Africa in 1995. Its rules of procedure had been amended and, for the first time, the Congress would offer a series of practical workshops to facilitate the concrete exchange of expertise and experience in a number of areas. Preparations for regional meetings were currently under way; they would be held during the first part of 1994, so that they could report to the Commission at its third session. United Nations regional institutes and commissions were generously assisting. He was grateful to them, particularly since some of them were in precarious positions.

15. The serious situation of the United Nations African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders was the subject of the report before the Committee (A/48/332). It had carried out some pioneering work, but its potential was being stifled by the shortage of funds. He called on African member States to remit their outstanding contributions and appealed to UNDP to continue its support. He also urged other international funding agencies and potential donors to consider ways of supporting the Institute and its counterpart in Latin America so that they could render the necessary services to their regions. He took the opportunity to express his heartfelt appreciation to the host Governments of those and other, affiliated institutes, namely Uganda, Costa Rica, Japan, Finland, Saudi Arabia, Australia and Canada. He was particularly grateful to the Italian Government for its generous support to the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute, which was an essential component of the Programme.

16. The institutes fulfilled key training and research functions and also assisted countries in their efforts to stem crime and modernize the administration of justice. In accordance with the directives of the Commission everything possible was being done to make crime prevention and the criminal justice programme as a whole as practical as possible. With help from some Governments the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch was carrying out several technical assistance projects designed to upgrade national systems and to foster collaborative initiatives taken by groups of States. It was endeavouring to meet the needs both of developing countries (for example, by helping the members of the Economic Community of West African States to formulate a new convention) and of countries in transition (for example, through an experimental criminal justice reform project in the Russian Federation).

17. The programme was also playing a significant role in United Nations peace-keeping operations. The Chief of the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch, while on assignment with the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC), had taken an active part in the elaboration of a new penal code and related dispositions. A code of conduct for law enforcement officials had also been formulated and a training programme had been initiated. An officer of the Branch was serving with the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) and a United Nations handbook of criminal justice standards for peace-keeping police had been drafted. A workshop on the role of civilian police in United Nations operations, organized in Graz in February 1993 with

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(Mr. Giacomelli)

participants from all major peace-keeping operations, had recommended closer cooperation between the Crime Programme and the Department of Peace-keeping Operations.

18. A meeting of experts, organized by the International Centre for Criminal Law Reform and Criminal Justice Policy in Vancouver, in cooperation with UNOV, and another held in Oñati, Spain, under the auspices of ISPAC, had made salient recommendations on the work of an international criminal tribunal.

19. The Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch had also led a mission to Somalia to propose ways of strengthening law enforcement and re-establishing a viable criminal justice system, in implementation of the plan approved by the Security Council. It had also helped the Government of El Salvador to develop a civilian police force and it stood ready to continue contributing to other major peace-keeping operations, such as those in Haiti and Mozambique.

20. As countries confronted the painful dilemma of safeguarding fragile freedoms in the face of escalating crime, they increasingly looked to the United Nations for assistance. Realizing that they could not deal with organized crime on their own, they were eager to work together and pool know-how and disinterested, objective advice. UNOV had a special responsibility in that regard.

21. The extent to which it could discharge that role depended, however, on the level of available resources. The cost of crime was astronomical, particularly the hidden, non-quantifiable costs, and Governments had to show they were ready to translate their eloquent pronouncements, such as the Versailles statement of principles and programme of action, into concrete terms. As a result of its recent restructuring, the programme was acquiring a higher profile, but Governments' expectations had increased. Although a new subprogramme on operational activities had been included in the medium-term plan and programme budget proposals, field projects were severely hampered by the scarcity of resources. In spite of the calls for strengthening the programme and upgrading the Branch to a Division, contained in General Assembly resolutions 46/152 and 47/91 and Economic and Social Council resolutions 1992/22 and 1993/31, action on a comprehensive budgetary review of the programme had once again been deferred. While the professional dedication of the Branch personnel was inestimable, dedication alone was not sufficient. The international community was looking to the Commission for leadership in a challenging and ever-changing field and the credibility of the United Nations was at stake. Crime prevention and criminal justice were basic to the realization of the primary concerns of the United Nations: human rights, democracy, good governance, peace and sustainable development.

22. Miss FOSTIER (Belgium), speaking on behalf of the European Community and its member States, said that the international community was concerned about the social and economic implications of the development and diversification of criminal activity at both national and transnational level.

23. The European Community was convinced of the need to intensify international cooperation and increase its effectiveness in combating organized crime. In that connection she stressed the importance of the United Nations crime

(Miss Fostier, Belgium)

prevention and criminal justice programme and of the new Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice established by the Economic and Social Council; she had heard with great interest the results of its second session, held from 13 to 23 April 1993. She shared the Committee's hope that mechanisms aimed at determining the objectives and specific activities of the programme would be set up. In that regard she recommended maintaining the priorities reaffirmed in Economic and Social Council resolution 1993/34, which stressed the need to combat national and transnational crime, particularly organized crime.

24. As for the new fields of operational activity, such as environmental crime, crime prevention in urban areas, technical cooperation and advisory services, the European Community recalled General Assembly resolution 47/91, which had requested the Secretary-General to upgrade the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch into a division of the Secretariat and to implement resolution 46/152, as well as Economic and Social Council resolution 1992/22 concerning crime prevention and criminal justice.

25. The member States of the European Community drew the attention of the General Assembly to the organization in Italy of a World Ministerial Conference on Organized Transnational Crime, to take place during the third quarter of 1994, which would help promote international cooperation in combating such forms of crime and bring about concerted action on such matters as the exchange of general information and specific data.

26. The European Community and its member States were stepping up their efforts to cooperate on mutual assistance in judicial, police and customs matters. They were acquiring new means of action, for instance by setting up "EUROPOL", which was intended to strengthen police cooperation in the Community. As to the prevention of organized crime, a working group set up in 1992 was to report to the ministers on the other measures that should be adopted by States members of the Community. The Community had also started to motivate the countries of Central and Eastern Europe which, in striving to achieve democracy, would have to cope with an increase in criminal activities and organized crime. The Community also contributed to work already undertaken along such lines by the Council of Europe.

27. At their meeting of 28 September 1993, the Ministers of Justice of the States members of the Community had adopted an important declaration stating their intention to simplify the extradition procedure between States members of the Community in the near future. The judicial cooperation group on criminal matters within the Twelve was entrusted with following up that ministerial declaration.

28. The entry into force of the Treaty on European Union should add a new dimension allowing for greater cooperation among member States in the field of justice and home affairs. The European Community was committed to improving cooperation in the prevention of drug trafficking and was stepping up police cooperation among member States on drug-related and serious crime.

29. The States members of the European Community reiterated the importance of all States ratifying the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in

(Miss Fostier, Belgium)

Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (1988). Furthermore, they emphasized that it would be in the interest of States to ratify the Council of Europe Convention on Laundering, Search, Seizure and Confiscation of the Proceeds of Crime (1990).

30. In conclusion, she reiterated her appreciation on behalf of the States members of the European Community for the work accomplished through the United Nations in crime prevention and criminal justice matters; the rationalization of the activities of the Organization in that area bore witness to the will of the international community to enhance its cooperation efforts.

31. Mrs. PETERSON (United States of America) said that her Government supported the efforts made by the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice at its thirty-second session to concentrate on substantive issues rather than organizational matters. On that occasion the Commission was expected to provide the Secretariat with substantive guidance on certain important practical aspects of its programme of work.

32. In its task the Commission should first of all focus its attention on technical assistance, cooperation and on seeking practical solutions to the problems of money laundering, compiling crime statistics, extradition and organized crime, bearing in mind that the respect of human rights was an integral part of criminal justice programmes. To that end the Commission had decided to consider as a matter of priority, at its next session, the implementation and use of five major instruments on law enforcement. However, it should be careful to avoid any overlapping with the work of other United Nations bodies such as the Commission on Human Rights and its Subcommission on the Prevention of Discrimination and the Protection of Minorities.

33. The Commission must also take account of the financial resources available to the Organization and, among the proposals which warranted its support, choose only those which concerned matters of absolute priority. Before undertaking such programmes, the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch must have the approval of the Commission in order to ensure that the requests made by Governments did not exceed the budgetary resources of the United Nations.

34. The United States was particularly interested in the issue of the role of criminal law in the protection of the environment; it had sponsored a resolution adopted during the second session in which the Commission requested the Secretary-General "to include environmental crime as an issue for technical cooperation" in order to assist recipient countries in formulating policies and legislation on environmental protection and introducing effective law enforcement procedures at national level.

35. The United States delegation also welcomed the adoption by the Commission of a resolution on violence against women in all its forms, which was consistent with those which the Commission on Human Rights and the Commission on the Status of Women intended to adopt.

36. Lastly, during its current session the Commission would be considering a resolution on the prevention of alien smuggling, an issue to which it would be requested to accord special attention at its next session so as to encourage

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(Mrs. Peterson, United States)

international cooperation in the area. The United States considered that alien smuggling was a global criminal problem which had reached alarming proportions. The aliens who went along with such arrangements, which were reminiscent of the slave trade, were subjected to dangerous and inhumane conditions during transit. They were reduced to forced labour or driven to crime to repay their smugglers. Moreover, alien smuggling threatened to turn public opinion against legal immigrants and legitimate refugees. That was why the United States looked forward to the adoption of the resolution, which invited Member States and the relevant international organizations to treat alien smuggling as a crime and to cooperate in bringing it to an end.

37. Mr. JAEGER (Austria) said that the report of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (E/1993/32), on the one hand, reflected the successful start of the work of the new Commission and, on the other hand, the great importance which the States Members of the United Nations attached to the crime prevention and criminal justice programme. By concentrating on a few priorities, such as organized and economic crime, money laundering, juvenile and violent criminality, as well as crime prevention in urban areas, and through enhanced cooperation with other United Nations bodies, the programme was proving very effective despite its limited financial and human resources. In that connection, the Austrian Government welcomed the fact that the Commission on the Prevention of Crime and Criminal Justice had added another priority to its programme of work, namely, the issue of violence against women in all its forms.

38. On the international level, the programme had launched new activities on an unprecedented scale which corresponded fully to the needs of the international community. A World Ministerial Conference on Organized Transnational Crime as well as an international conference on money laundering and the control of the proceeds of crime were scheduled for 1994. Furthermore, important steps had been taken in preparation for the Ninth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders to be held in 1995. However, Austria considered that the budget allocated to the Congress in the draft programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995 was inadequate, particularly in comparison with those provided for other international events.

39. In Austria, drug-related deaths had more than doubled over the past two years, coinciding with a sharp increase of drug-related and transnational and organized crime linked to the fact that Austria was not a producer country. Austria therefore hoped that urgent international action would be taken to combat the scourge.

40. She noted that the priorities chosen by the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice at its first session in 1992 were well justified and increasingly important for national law systems. In the area of drug-related crime, the Commission could profit from close cooperation with the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP), as recommended by General Assembly resolution 47/102, with a view to matching efforts and avoiding duplication. In the same spirit, Austria encouraged strengthening cooperation aimed at combating money laundering, particularly with the Financial Action Task Force established by the Group of Seven major industrialized countries, which already cooperated very effectively with UNDCP.

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(Mr. Jaeger, Austria)

41. Austria stressed, however, that the Commission could not properly fulfil its mandate if the Secretariat services working on its behalf did not have the financial and human resources needed to respond to the growing requests from Member States and international institutions related to crime prevention and criminal justice. That situation was further aggravated by the fact that the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, following the transfer to New York of the Centre's other services, was cooperating as a unit in its own right with UNDCP. Moreover, at the second session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, it was stated that the effectiveness of the programme had been limited by the lack of resources. In section 13 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995, the share allocated to the United Nations crime prevention and criminal justice programme obviously did not correspond to the high priority attached to it by the General Assembly. Austria therefore hoped that the General Assembly would reassess the share allocated to the programme with a view to implementing its policy aimed at strengthening the programme and rendering it more operational. Such strengthening was also particularly warranted since the democratization process, notably in the new democracies in Central and Eastern Europe, would remain illusory without a functioning law enforcement and criminal justice system in place. In addition, members of the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch had been serving on peace-keeping and peace-building missions, for example, in Cambodia, Somalia, Nicaragua and the former Yugoslavia.

42. She also drew attention to the fact that the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice appeared to be the only functional commission of the Economic and Social Council with annual meetings serviced by a unit ranked below a division; the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council had repeatedly requested to have the United Nations crime prevention and criminal justice programme strengthened and the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch upgraded. Referring to paragraph 8 of General Assembly resolution 47/91, she supported addressing a further request to the Secretary-General for an immediate upgrading of the Branch to a division, without budgetary implications. In addition to contributing to the effectiveness of the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch, such an initiative would also facilitate the ongoing preparations for the Ninth Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders.

Draft resolution A/C.3/48/L.2

43. The CHAIRMAN informed the Committee that draft resolution A/C.3/48/L.2, entitled "Positive and full inclusion of persons with disabilities in all aspects of society and the leadership role of the United Nations therein", had no implications for the programme budget.

44. Draft resolution A/C.3/48/L.2 was adopted without a vote.

Draft resolution A/C.3/48/L.3

45. The CHAIRMAN stated that draft resolution A/C.3/48/L.3, entitled "Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities", had no implications for the programme budget.

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46. Mr. BAUDOT (Director, Division for Social Policy and Development, Department of Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development) pointed out that, according to Part IV, entitled "Monitoring mechanism", a Special Rapporteur was to be appointed for three years to monitor the matter. As no provision had been made for that post in the programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995, if the Committee adopted the draft resolution in its current form, the Secretariat would have to find extrabudgetary funds or voluntary contributions to finance it.

47. Draft resolution A/C.3/48/L.3 was adopted without a vote.

48. Mr. URTASUN (Spain) welcomed the adoption of the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities. Although not mandatory, those Rules were particularly important in that they demonstrated a firm moral and political will of Member States to adopt measures which would ensure equalization of opportunities for persons with disabilities in the society in which they lived. Similarly, the emphasis which those Rules placed on implementation measures and the monitoring mechanism was a clear sign of that political will.

49. Spain was pleased to note that the correct Spanish terminology for disabled persons had been used in the Rules, unlike the case with the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons, where the problems posed by terminology had prompted countries to demand precision in the terminology used. The process of formulating the Rules had resulted in fruitful cooperation in that respect between the Secretariat and the Spanish-speaking delegations, thus producing a text on which there was full consensus regarding the terminology.

50. The Rules which the United Nations proposed to adopt should be circulated specifically with a view to encouraging their effective world-wide application. The International Day of Disabled Persons, to be held on 3 December, would provide an excellent opportunity for the United Nations and its Member States to organize a series of activities in that regard.

Draft resolution A/C.3/48/L.4

51. Mrs. KAMAL (Secretary of the Committee) noted that there were corrections to be made to the Russian version of the draft resolution; in the title, the word "Day" should replace the word "Year", while paragraph 4, in connection with the World Conference on Human Rights, should read "held" instead of "to be held" at Vienna from 4 to 15 June 1993.

52. The CHAIRMAN informed the Committee that draft resolution A/C.3/48/L.4, entitled "International Day of Disabled Persons", had no implications for the programme budget.

53. Mr. KONKOBO (Burkina Faso) pointed out that the French version of the document contained two paragraphs 3.

54. Draft resolution A/C.3/48/L.4 was adopted without a vote.

The meeting rose at 11.30 a.m.

UNITED NATIONS
General Assembly
FORTY-EIGHTH SESSION
Official Records

THIRD COMMITTEE
19th meeting
held on
Friday, 29 October 1993
at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 19th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. VAN DER HEIJDEN (Netherlands)
(Vice-Chairman)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 110: CRIME PREVENTION AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE (continued) (A/48/332 and A/48/359)

1. Mr. SOTIROV (Bulgaria) said that, in spite of the improved political climate that had resulted from the fall of totalitarian regimes, many parts of the globe were racked by violence, uncertainty and human suffering. Lawlessness and a rising crime rate hindered progress towards democracy and impaired the general well-being of societies. While increased contacts among countries, the development of technologies and communications and the relaxation of border controls had positive aspects, they also fostered transnational crime.

2. The General Assembly had recognized the need for new responses to that challenge by adopting, in 1991, the Statement of principles and programme of action of the United Nations on crime prevention and criminal justice programme and establishing the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice as a functional commission of the Economic and Social Council. In the two years since its establishment, the Commission had played a useful role in the field of cooperation and, in addition to the exchange of experience and information, had contributed to policy guidance and priority-setting in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice. The Commission could make a more valuable contribution if, in addition to working with experts, it cooperated with all those who were directly involved in crime prevention and detection (police, investigators, prosecutor's office); it should also make better use of the expertise in related fields, such as computer technology, medicine, psychology and sociology.

3. The high-level plenary meetings of the General Assembly had demonstrated the urgency of adopting practical measures against the illicit production, sale, demand, trafficking and distribution of narcotics and psychotropic substances. The need for enhanced international cooperation was particularly evident in the light of the increased crime rate in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, which endangered both individual States and the international community as a whole. The extent of drug-trafficking, organized crime, rackets and money laundering in those countries was unprecedented.

4. Bulgaria, which was situated at the crossroads of Europe and the Middle East, was particularly affected by those phenomena. According to available United Nations data, approximately 70 per cent of all heroin-trafficking passed through the Balkans. Bulgaria therefore attached great importance to international cooperation in the fight against organized crime, in particular technical and expert assistance, exchange of information and close partnership between the relevant institutions of interested countries. Bulgaria had recently acceded to the Council of Europe Convention on Laundering, Search, Seizure and Confiscation of the Proceeds from Crime. Moreover, the Bulgarian Government was taking measures to strengthen its means of combating crime-related problems. In 1991, a special police service branch had been established at the Ministry of the Interior to fight organized crime. A strategy and a master plan, coordinated by an inter-ministerial committee, had been adopted in July 1993 and were currently being implemented. In the framework of the current reforms in the field of criminal justice, the Bulgarian

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Government had just submitted to the National Assembly a new draft penal act that provided for protection of all types of property and defined a variety of relatively new forms of offences, such as extortion, money laundering, vandalism, fraudulent bankruptcy, theft of nuclear products and computer crimes. The act also abolished the death penalty.

5. His delegation was confident that active cooperation and information exchange among Member States would make it possible to prevent certain crimes by eliminating the conditions that provoked or facilitated them. In that respect, the role of education and public information was essential, particularly in the prevention of juvenile delinquency. That type of criminality had increased considerably in Bulgaria during the past couple of years, and a draft act on that issue was currently being discussed and prepared. His delegation emphasized the need for close cooperation between the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and the Commission on Human Rights, since the issue of criminality was primarily an economic and social problem. Moreover, the balance between crime-prevention efforts and respect for the human rights of offenders should be preserved.

6. Mr. ANDRIYAKA (Ukraine) said that his delegation shared the concerns expressed by the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Vienna in his introductory statement on the escalation of violence and the expansion of organized crime, and stressed the need for joint efforts against terrorism, drug trafficking, corruption and economic and ecological crimes. In that regard, his delegation appreciated the conclusions and recommendation adopted at the Ministerial Meeting on the Creation of an Effective United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme, held in Paris in 1991, as well as General Assembly resolution 46/152, in which the General Assembly had established the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice. The decision to transfer the discussion on crime-related issues to the intergovernmental level was a very important and timely step. His delegation supported the priority themes chosen by the Commission and formulated Economic and Social Council resolution 1992/22, namely: national and transnational crime, in particular money laundering and the role of criminal law in the protection of the environment; crime prevention in urban areas, juvenile and violent criminality; and improvement in the management and administration of criminal justice and related systems. His delegation was satisfied with the Commission's adoption at its second session of a number of important draft resolutions in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice (resolutions 1993/27 to 1993/34).

7. In accordance with the recommendations of the Paris Ministerial Meeting and Economic and Social Council resolution 1992/22, which recommended that priority attention should be paid to operational activities in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice, Ukraine was taking an active part in elaborating the draft international convention on the status and safety of the personnel of the United Nations force and associated civilian personnel, which was currently under consideration in the Sixth Committee, and hoped that there would be closer cooperation between the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme and the Department of Peace-keeping Operations. His delegation attached paramount importance to the question of technical cooperation. Ukraine, as well as other countries, deserved the solidarity and

(Mr. Andriyaka, Ukraine)

assistance of the international community. His delegation supported the establishment of a new subprogramme on operational activities, and was convinced that the elaboration, implementation and evaluation of technical cooperation projects would strengthen the capacity of third world countries and countries in transition to combat crime.

8. In the light of the limited financial resources allocated to the implementation of the United Nations Programme, the creation of mechanisms, including a fund for mobilizing human, financial and other resources for facilitating technical cooperation, would be very opportune. While his delegation approved the efforts to develop cooperation and coordinate the activities of United Nations bodies in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice, it considered that, in that field, considerable resources remained unused. In that regard, his delegation welcomed the efforts of the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch to coordinate the relevant programmes and was confident that the next United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders would play an important role in that area. The success of the Congress depended in large part on the preparatory arrangements undertaken by States at the national, regional and international levels; those activities included a meeting on money laundering to be held in Italy in 1994 under United Nations auspices and a meeting of experts on other aspects of transnational crime, in particular ecological crime, which would be held later in the year in Vienna.

9. In a period marked by a decline in production, disruption of economic links and inadequate legislation, corruption and money laundering affected all sectors of the economy. Faced with the problems of currency counterfeiting, illicit drug-trafficking and trade in arms, the Ukrainian authorities had been forced to take concrete steps to combat crime and strengthen law-enforcement bodies. A number of new laws, including laws on the security service, militia, the public prosecutor's office and operative search activities, had been enacted. The reform of the judicial system and the courts was continuing and new criminal legislation was being developed. In June 1993, the Ukrainian Parliament had adopted the government programme to combat crime; one of the priorities of that programme was to expand international cooperation in that field. Ukrainian law-enforcement bodies had signed more than 20 bilateral agreements in the field of combating crime with their counterparts in other countries, in particular neighbouring countries; basic bilateral agreements concluded by Ukraine with other States also contained provisions dealing with cooperation in that field. Ukraine was paying greater attention to such cooperation and was ready to strengthen it at all levels.

10. Mr. SCHATZER (Director, External Relations, International Organization for Migration (IOM)) drew the Committee's attention to trafficking in migrant workers. The phenomenon, while not new, gave increasing cause for concern and necessitated concerted action in view of the growing number of people who sought to emigrate and the increasing involvement of international criminal networks. The latter treated human beings as just another piece of merchandise, without regard to human dignity and safety.

11. Moreover, when national authorities apprehended migrants who were the victims of such trafficking, they faced a complex and costly problem. Return

(Mr. Schatzer)

was often the only solution. In recent months IOM had been called upon to help to repatriate several hundred such people in that situation.

12. It was the human dimension of such trafficking that required attention. Would-be migrants were the victims of the crime or felony in which they took part. The attraction of the target country, on which they had only limited and distorted information, and uncertainty about their future in societies characterized by social and economic change, provided their motivation.

13. In response to that situation, countries of origin, transit and destination must coordinate and improve their cooperation in the collection and dissemination of information as well as with regard to repatriation procedures. Potential victims of trafficking needed credible and reliable information on the risks involved.

14. National legislation providing for sanctions against employers of illegal immigrants and for severe punishment for traffickers must be adopted and enforced. Abuse of the asylum system, designed to protect refugees, must also be avoided. In certain cases a change in procedures to deal with unjustified requests for asylum appeared necessary.

15. Mechanisms to ensure the swift return of apprehended victims, while safeguarding their human dignity, must be further developed, and measures must be adopted to deal with migrants without proper documents. Humane, rather than criminal, treatment of women migrants who were sold or tricked into prostitution was also essential.

16. The International Organization for Migration, which had studied the question of trafficking in migrant workers for some time, had carried out, in addition to assisted return, the following measures: dissemination of information in certain countries of origin, in close cooperation with UNHCR; data collection in order to better define the dimensions and dynamics of the problem; the provision of technical cooperation to Governments confronting the problem; and the convening of forums for interested Governments and organizations on specific aspects of the question, such as repatriation, specific regional aspects and law enforcement. IOM was also initiating a periodic newsletter on the subject.

17. In view of the illegal nature of trafficking it was next to impossible to obtain reliable data on the magnitude of the problem. A more systematic approach was thus necessary. IOM stood ready to help the United Nations and its Member States to find specific responses to the problem.

18. Mr. SISWOYO (Indonesia) said that international organized criminal activity had reached alarming proportions, to the extent where it threatened the peace and stability of all countries, particularly developing countries. Increasingly sophisticated methods were used, rendering criminal activities particularly ominous and obliging law enforcement agencies to modernize their methods.

19. For the developing countries the situation had become all the more precarious in that their social development had been stymied by structural adjustment policies and rising population growth. Disillusionment among the

(Mr. Siswoyo, Indonesia)

young, in particular, as a result of unemployment, explained the increase in juvenile crime. In general terms crime prevention policies must be coupled with improvements in the socio-economic environment, which required the cooperation of developed and developing countries alike and the revitalization of the dialogue between them.

20. The question of crime prevention and criminal justice was best addressed within the framework of the United Nations system, where advantage could be taken of inputs and experience from every country. The Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, the principal policy-making body of the United Nations in that field, must be responsive to the pressing problems of developing countries and ensure the provision of technical assistance to enable them to adopt appropriate legislation so as to enhance their capacity to combat crime. Further, the Commission should strengthen regional and international cooperation in the prevention of crime by utilizing the knowledge and experience of the developing countries in that area in formulating activities in various regions.

21. Indonesia looked forward to the World Ministerial Conference on Organized Transnational Crime, to be held in 1994 under United Nations auspices. The Conference, which would provide an occasion to focus on aspects of legislation and their adequacy in dealing with various forms of transnational crime, as well as to identify appropriate guidelines for Governments, should also provide an opportunity to strengthen international cooperation in crime prevention and propose a more integrated approach. The holding of workshops on such topics as extradition and international cooperation, the mass media and crime prevention, and urban policy and crime prevention, should facilitate an exchange of information and experiences. His delegation looked forward to the preparations for those workshops as well as to the preparations for the Ninth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders.

22. As to the operational activities of the crime prevention and criminal justice programme, the focus should be placed on improving channels of communication with Governments so as to facilitate input by developing countries and strengthen the global crime and criminal justice information network. Likewise, there remained a need for advisory services for Member States and an evaluation of their needs and capacities. It was his delegation's understanding that such an initiative would be undertaken and that projects would be formulated on the requisite infrastructure for the building of criminal justice systems.

23. Regarding crime prevention, Indonesia's policy, in accordance with its 1988 State policy guidelines, was directed towards enhancing knowledge of the law so that all Indonesian citizens would be aware of their rights and duties. Information meetings had been held in the 27 provinces of the country and guidance on legal procedures had been given in 1,290 villages during the year 1991-1992. In addition, in order to ensure observance of the rights of all, including the poor, legal aid services had been established and access to such services simplified. Regarding the treatment of offenders placed on probation, mention should be made of the implementation of vocational training carried out in cooperation with the Department of Manpower, the Department of Industry and the Department of Education and Culture, as well as the private sector.

(Mr. Siswoyo, Indonesia)

Particular attention had been paid by the Indonesian Government to offenders between the ages of 18 and 23.

24. Lastly, his delegation reaffirmed its support for the activities undertaken by the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and for the various crime control initiatives to be taken under United Nations auspices. He stressed the need for the coordination of those activities. His delegation also stressed the importance of the link between the socio-economic environment and crime, which it was essential to understand clearly.

25. Ms. SEMAFUMU (Uganda) said that the issue of crime prevention and criminal justice was perhaps the best illustration of the intrinsic link between peace and security, economic and social development and human rights. The rise in criminality in many categories was a telling symptom of a disturbing dysfunction in society. The work done by the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice at its second session, as described in its report (E/1993/32), therefore represented an encouraging attempt to face the problem.

26. Her delegation commended the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch for the enthusiasm and dedication with which it was shouldering its new responsibilities in the face of limited human and financial resources, and hoped that the Branch would soon be strengthened in line with General Assembly resolution 47/91 and Economic and Social Council resolution 1993/31.

27. While Uganda supported the Branch's cooperation with United Nations peace-keeping bodies, it believed that such cooperation should be limited. It also hoped that those efforts would not be a first step towards rearranging the priorities of the United Nations crime prevention and criminal justice programme and that it would not lead to the depletion of the already very limited resources of the programme, particularly those allocated for technical assistance.

28. The growing demand for programmes of technical assistance was the best proof of their usefulness. In that context, her delegation pointed out that the capacity of developing countries to build efficient and humane systems of law-enforcement and criminal-justice administration was severely hampered by economic difficulties they faced and by the cuts in public expenditure which they were forced to make as part of their economic reforms. While she therefore welcomed the Commission's attention to advisory services in policy-making, institution building, legal and procedural reform and the further training of law-enforcement and criminal-justice personnel, she maintained nevertheless that greater attention should be given to the difficulties experienced by developing countries through lack of equipment. In that context, the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch could help in mobilizing the necessary resources for the purchase of equipment and brokering the transfer of simple technologies to facilitate the detection and investigation of crimes.

29. For the first time in history, a United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders would be held in Africa. Her delegation trusted that the discussions under way between the two countries which had offered to host the Ninth Congress would reach an early conclusion and that preparations for the Congress could begin without delay. Her delegation

(Ms. Semafumu, Uganda)

recalled that the Ugandan Government had offered to host the Regional Preparatory Meeting.

30. Over the previous few years, the world had evinced a tendency towards regional integration, primarily due to economic factors. Africa was no exception. Thus, an African Economic Community was being established, in accordance with the Treaty adopted by the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in 1991. The establishment of that community would inevitably lead to a relaxation of frontier controls, enabling criminals to evade prosecution. Furthermore, as strategies to combat organized crime became more effective in other parts of the world, crime syndicates and drug barons were transferring their activities to countries where they were less likely to be troubled. Without any doubt, the deficiencies in their criminal-justice systems made the countries of Africa easy victims for organized crime.

31. It was precisely with that concern in mind that Uganda continued to attach the greatest importance to regional integration as a means of strengthening the fight against crime. Her delegation had closely studied the report of the Secretary-General on the African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (A/48/332) and it concurred with the conclusions contained in paragraphs 36 and 37. It was grateful to the Organization for the financial support provided to the Institute through the regular budget and through the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), but hoped that the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), through which the funds were channelled, would ensure that they reached the Institute promptly and would help it mobilize further resources.

32. In addition, her delegation requested the Secretariat to correct an error in paragraph 29 of the Secretary-General's report: the grant had been given to the Institute for the year 1992 and not for the biennium 1992-1993. It also took the opportunity to ask the UNDP Administrator to continue to provide assistance to the Institute, bearing in mind the negative impact of the rise in crime on development.

33. The grant given to the Institute to cover its administrative costs had enabled it to deliver various programmes (data collection, advisory services, organization of training courses and seminars). As the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Vienna (UNOV), Mr. Giacomelli, had said, the financial situation of the Institute remained precarious. Accordingly, at the current session, the Group of African States intended to submit a draft resolution seeking continued financial support for the Institute. Her delegation hoped that the consensus which had made possible the adoption of Economic and Social Council resolution 1993/33 on that issue would continue to prevail and that all delegations would be willing to support the draft.

34. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee had concluded its consideration of agenda item 110 and invited members to resume consideration of item 109.

AGENDA ITEM 109: SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE WORLD SOCIAL SITUATION AND TO YOUTH, AGEING, DISABLED PERSONS AND THE FAMILY (continued) (A/C.3/48/L.6)

35. Mrs. ALVAREZ (Dominican Republic) introduced the draft resolution entitled "Implementation of the International Plan of Action on Ageing" (A/C.3/48/L.6), sponsored by Austria, Malta and her own country. She announced a revision of paragraph 9 of the text, replacing the word "a programme", in the first line, by the words "the conceptual framework of a programme".

36. In the draft, the General Assembly noted recent measures to reorganize the social and economic activities of the United Nations and called upon the Secretary-General to "maintain the integrity and the identity of the United Nations programme on ageing". The General Assembly welcomed the decision to observe 1999 as the International Year of Older Persons; invited Governments, non-governmental organizations and the relevant agencies of the United Nations to submit to the Secretary-General their proposals for the preparations for and observance of the International Year; and asked the Secretary-General to draft the conceptual framework of a programme for the preparation and observance of the Year and to submit it, through the Commission for Social Development at its thirty-fourth session in 1995, for consideration by the General Assembly at its fiftieth session in 1995.

37. The sponsors of the draft resolution hoped that it would be adopted by consensus, as in previous years.

The meeting rose at 11.05 a.m.

UNITED NATIONS
General Assembly
FORTY-EIGHTH SESSION
Official Records

THIRD COMMITTEE
20th meeting
held on
Thursday, 28 October 1993
at 3 p.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 20th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. VAN DER HEIJDEN (Vice-Chairman) (Netherlands)

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AGENDA ITEM 110: CRIME PREVENTION AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE (continued)

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26 November 1993

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

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In the absence of Mr. Kukan (Slovakia), Mr. Van Der Heijden (Netherlands), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 110: CRIME PREVENTION AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE (continued) (A/48/332 and A/48/359)

1. Mr. RATA (New Zealand), speaking also on behalf of Australia and Canada, said that transnational crime had become too large a problem to be dealt with by individual countries. Criminals were exploiting the same technological advances in transportation and communication that had led to a growth in legitimate international trade. Organized transnational crime not only bribed officials and engendered political corruption but also generated violence, threatened Governments and inhibited economic and social development.

2. Through the creation of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, the international community had acknowledged that the traditional approach to law enforcement was no longer adequate. Countries must collectively adopt effective measures and respond flexibly to help each other in the fight against crime. Australia, Canada and New Zealand had enacted domestic legislation on mutual assistance in criminal matters. However, while new initiatives against transnational crime were welcome, they must not duplicate work already being carried out by other international bodies within and outside the United Nations. In view of the limited resources available to the international community, the fight against organized crime must be focused and conducted in a coordinated manner.

3. Australia, Canada and New Zealand wholeheartedly supported the draft Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women recommended by the Economic and Social Council for adoption by the General Assembly (A/C.3/48/L.5).

4. Concerning the Ninth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, to be held in 1995, the three countries welcomed the new rule of procedure requiring the submission of draft resolutions four months prior to the Congress; it was their understanding, however, that last-minute amendments on non-substantive matters would be permitted.

5. An effective international crime prevention and criminal justice programme would enhance global progress in other important areas such as economic and social development and the promotion of human rights. Therefore, adequate funding of United Nations initiatives in that area would allow the Organization to meet requests from Member States for assistance and ensure implementation of existing standards.

6. Mr. WOON (Malaysia) said that the selection by the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice of organized transnational crime as its first priority was justified, especially as such crime threatened the security and stability of countries, was a major cause of corruption and subverted national economies and political structures. International cooperation was required in order to control if not to eradicate organized crime. Since organized crime had

(Mr. Woon, Malaysia)

close links with the proliferation of drugs and narcotics trafficking, and since the scale and sophistication of the illicit drug trade could not be tackled by any single country, the international community needed to share intelligence at all levels in combating that plague.

7. The Commission should continue studying that question with a view to coming up with realistic suggestions, and in that regard should coordinate its work with the Commission on Narcotic Drugs. Malaysia welcomed the convening in Italy in 1994 of a World Ministerial Conference on Organized Transnational Crime and of the International Conference on Laundering and Controlling Proceeds of Crime.

8. The international community could also share experiences and information in the prevention of urban, juvenile and violent crime - the second priority area selected by the Commission - through non-enforcement means. Law-enforcement methods should continue to win the confidence of the general public, which was essential if law enforcement officers were to perform their functions effectively. The officers should be involved in community development and education of the young: moral education must start at an early age and form the very foundation of crime prevention.

9. His country was horrified at the atrocities committed in Bosnia and Herzegovina and considered "ethnic cleansing" as an organized crime that flagrantly violated human rights. It therefore welcomed the establishment of the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991.

10. Ms. HORIUCHI (Japan) stressed the essential need for international cooperation to combat crime and promote legal reform, particularly through training programmes and information activities on crime prevention and criminal justice. Measures against newly emerging crimes such as transnational, organized, environmental and drug-related crime would only be effective if they were coordinated by the countries concerned. There was increasing interest on the part of developing countries in technical cooperation, advisory services and other types of assistance which would help to ease such problems as lack of skilled personnel and technological know-how. While it was important to meet the needs of Member States in new areas of crime prevention and criminal justice, paramount concern should be to enhance the effectiveness of activities relating to current priorities.

11. Her Government hoped that the Ninth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders would contribute further to international cooperation in crime prevention and criminal justice. Japan, through the Ministry of Justice and the National Police Agency and in cooperation with the Asia and Far East Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, had conducted international seminars on organized crime and drug-related crime in Asia.

12. Mr. EL DEEB (Egypt) said that his country devoted particular attention to crime prevention and hoped to adopt programmes to ensure effective coordination of crime-prevention activities, which were inspired by the values of Egyptian civilization and Islamic culture. Egyptian laws guaranteed the rights of litigants before the courts, since justice was the basis of stability.

13. The international community was called upon to fight the rising rates of crime, and in particular organized crime. His delegation therefore welcomed the forthcoming World International Conference on Organized Transnational Crime. Egypt also looked forward to the 1995 Ninth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, at which international cooperation would be discussed, experience exchanged and preventive measures proposed in the interests of more effective crime prevention. Appropriate measures should be taken to ensure the success of the Congress by providing the requisite resources and ensuring implementation of its recommendations. The holding of the Congress for the first time in Africa would help to strengthen international cooperation with African countries. Crime prevention was an essential component of economic and social development. In that connection, he urged the international community to increase its financial support for the African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, whose activities were described in the Secretary-General's report (A/48/332).

14. His delegation also commended the activities of, and called for increased support for, the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch, which had recently been upgraded pursuant to General Assembly resolution 47/91.

15. Mr. LIN Chongfei (China) said that the statement of principles and programme of action of the United Nations crime prevention and criminal justice programme, approved by the General Assembly in resolution 46/152, had provided States with guidelines and policies. However, many requests from the developing countries for technical cooperation to implement those policies had for years been left unfulfilled, as a result of the serious financial difficulties of the United Nations. His delegation hoped that all developed countries and international financing institutions would review their aid programmes to ensure that adequate contributions went to the field of criminal justice.

16. Although crime prevention relied primarily on national efforts, international cooperation against all types of crime, especially organized transnational crime, was also of vital importance. His delegation hoped that Member States would adopt effective measures of inter-State cooperation in crime prevention and criminal justice to curb the spread of international crime. Crime prevention in particular should be a priority of the United Nations system and specifically of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice.

17. Recent measures to further open up his country to the outside world had brought about rapid economic development and significant progress in legislation and law enforcement. China was facing new problems in the field of criminal justice; certain types of crime, such as economic crime, were on the rise. In its struggle to combat crime, his Government could learn from other States and was ready to engage in technical cooperation with them.

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18. Mr. TSEPOV (Russian Federation) said that since many countries were experiencing a rise in organized crime, drug trafficking and terrorism, the fight against crime was of vital importance to the entire international community. The Ministerial Meeting on the Creation of an Effective United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme, held in 1991, had laid the foundation for further cooperation in combating crime within the United Nations system. The establishment of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, which recommended specific measures to implement the principles and programme of action in General Assembly resolution 46/152, had promoted international cooperation in the fight against organized crime, drug trafficking and money-laundering.

19. His delegation supported the decision of the Economic and Social Council to convene the World Ministerial Conference on Organized Transnational Crime in Italy in 1994, which would focus on finalizing national legislation, defining the most effective forms of international cooperation and drafting international instruments to strengthen joint action against organized crime. In preparation for that Conference, it would be useful to study the possibility of elaborating under United Nations auspices, international instruments and models for bilateral agreements in that field. The Russian Federation was ready to cooperate closely in that endeavour. It had also co-sponsored Economic and Social Council resolution 1993/30 on control of the proceeds of crime, which recommended a review of relevant national legislation and its practical implementation. Governments should be provided with guidelines and principles for the discovery and investigation of money-laundering and the treatment of offenders. In that regard, the International Conference on Laundering and Controlling Proceeds of Crime, also to be held in Italy in 1994, would constitute a timely contribution to the fight against organized crime.

20. A priority of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice was to improve technical assistance in order to obtain the most practical results from international cooperation and exchanges of information. In that regard, his delegation wished to express its gratitude to the Economic and Social Council for endorsing the decision of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice to provide assistance and expertise for a large-scale project to upgrade the criminal-justice system in the Russian Federation which included introducing, on an experimental basis, the trial-by-jury system for most dangerous crimes, establishing an information collection system and drafting new legislation.

21. The Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice should be commended for its timely discussion of the systematic violence committed against women during armed conflicts, which was an important step in resolving the problem of protecting victims of such conflicts. Its work, together with that of the Commission on the Status of Women and the Commission on Human Rights, would help to promote humanitarian initiatives in the General Assembly and other international forums.

22. His delegation was particularly alarmed at the sharp rise in crime in Russia where, according to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, there were several thousand groups of organized criminals, many of which were well-armed and had ties to international crime. The number of crimes involving the use of arms had

(Mr. Tsepov, Russian Federation)

increased by 300 per cent since the previous year. His country was well aware that crime went beyond international borders, and was working together with other members of the Commonwealth of Independent States to conclude multilateral agreements in the fight against crime and drug trafficking. However, regional cooperation did not suffice: the fight against crime required the efforts of the entire international community, and in that regard the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice had a decisive role to play in directing those efforts.

23. Mrs. SHERMAN-PETER (Bahamas), speaking on behalf of the twelve States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), emphasized the contribution which the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice had made towards developing an effective response to rising crime and the serious social and economic problems which it engendered. The priority themes identified by the Commission to guide its work for the period from 1992 through 1996 provided a sound basis for formulating and implementing practical policies and programmes to improve the effectiveness of global efforts in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice. With regard to the invitation extended to Member States to assist the Commission in its strategic management of the crime programme by making proposals on specific objectives and activities in that area, the CARICOM States believed that those proposals would be most effective if made within the context of the priority themes.

24. The technical assistance and professional services in crime prevention and criminal justice provided by the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch were of particular importance to the developing countries. An increasing number of countries were requesting those services and it was hoped that they would be expanded to accommodate as many requests as possible. While the CARICOM States considered it useful that professional services of the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch were utilized for United Nations peace-keeping operations, it believed that the Branch must remain focused on the priority areas agreed to by the Commission and endorsed by the Economic and Social Council.

25. Two significant conferences scheduled to take place under the auspices of the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch in 1994 - the International Conference on Laundering and Controlling Proceeds of Crime and the World Ministerial Conference on Organized Transnational Crime - would address crime issues affecting numerous countries in the developed and developing world. The capacity of developing countries to participate in those two conferences, however, would be limited owing to resource constraints. Such considerations should be taken into account in further planning for the conferences. Furthermore, since work had been done in the area of money-laundering and organized crime by other international bodies, every effort should be made to avoid duplication of efforts. The Compendium of United Nations Standards and Norms in Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice greatly facilitated United Nations efforts to promote implementation of those standards and norms at the national, regional and international levels, and should be widely disseminated and used in the analytical study of contemporary crime problems.

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(Mrs. Sherman-Peter, Bahamas)

26. The Commission's initiative on violence against women reinforced the work of other competent bodies concerned with women's rights, including the Commission on the Status of Women and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. The CARICOM States agreed with the proposals the Commission had made to counteract violence against women and to include that issue on the agenda of the Ninth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders. The new format adopted for the Congress should make it a forum for discussion on major practical strategies in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice at the national, regional and international levels and should also increase the capacity of the developing countries to assume a more participatory role in the Congress. The CARICOM States believed that the advance submission of draft resolutions to be adopted by the Congress provided time for their consideration and should facilitate their adoption. Decision-making at the Ninth Congress should, however, be more coherent.

27. The interregional, regional and associated institutes in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice were making a significant contribution through technical assistance and research projects. The CARICOM States urged international funding agencies and potential donors to consider ways of supporting those institutes, especially in developing countries.

28. The CARICOM States were pleased with the efforts of the Commission and the Branch to forge cooperative relations with other organs of the United Nations system involved in crime-related issues. As a result of organizational changes in the United Nations social development structure, the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs had been transferred to New York, while the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch remained in Vienna. Now was an opportune time to consider the status of the Branch; failure to do so could seriously undermine the effectiveness of the crime programme. Account should be taken of the General Assembly's decision to upgrade the Branch into a division.

29. The CARICOM States regretted that requests for assistance had increased without a corresponding increase in the allocation of resources for crime-prevention programmes. It was essential to allocate an appropriate level of resources for crime prevention and criminal justice, which was an essential element in resolving social development problems in general.

The meeting rose at 4.20 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS
General Assembly
FORTY-EIGHTH SESSION
Official Records

THIRD COMMITTEE
21st meeting
held on
Tuesday, 2 November 1993
at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 21st MEETING

Chairman: Mr. KUKAN (Slovakia)

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26 November 1993

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The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 112: INTERNATIONAL DRUG CONTROL (A/48/3 (Chap. VII.E), A/48/178, 286, 291, 327, 329 and Corr.1, and 353; A/C.3/48/2 and 5)

1. The CHAIRMAN recalled that, in accordance with its decision taken on 24 September 1993, the General Assembly had held a number of high-level plenary meetings to examine the status of international cooperation in the field of drug control. At the conclusion of that debate, on 28 October the Assembly had adopted resolution 48/12 on measures to strengthen international cooperation in that field.

2. Mr. JUPPIN de FONDAUMIERE (United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP)) said that the adoption of General Assembly resolution 48/12 had reaffirmed the Member States' commitment to the fight against drug abuse. The international community had an effective arsenal at its disposal, including a common strategy, a blueprint for action and the required institutional machinery. The time had come to shift the emphasis to action.

3. At the national level, countries must promote the active involvement of local, regional and national governments, community groups and non-governmental organizations. To that end, the Programme had sought to nurture the participation of a wide spectrum of partners in the fight against drug abuse. The private sector had recognized the need for a broad-based effort in drug control, and promising initiatives had also been launched with the media, city administrations and sports organizations. Governments should fully incorporate their drug-control priorities and strategies into their overall socio-economic development plans, ensure adequate internal coordination between the various sectors involved and develop institutions to meet the challenge.

4. UNDCP advocated the formulation of drug-control master plans by each country. Such plans would provide a comprehensive picture of the drug-abuse situation and enable external partners to assist better in their implementation. Those plans were important elements that should be incorporated into the country strategy. UNDCP had also set up a country-programme framework to facilitate assessment of control requirements. Internal coordination was essential at the national level. A drug-control focal point could ensure the necessary coordination and communication links and facilitate contacts with bilateral and multilateral partners. All Governments should ratify and fully adhere to the international drug-control conventions so that the necessary legal framework could be established.

5. The ability of drug traffickers to redirect operations to other countries underscored the need for close cooperation among States on a regional and subregional basis. Due to the vast increase in cross-border exchanges, random border-checks were rapidly losing their effectiveness. Exchange of information and intelligence must replace earlier control mechanisms as the foundation for an effective international control system. That required a fundamental rethinking of the goals of inter-State cooperation. In addition to intraregional communication, there was a need for joint implementation of drug-control activities. The pooling of resources was a prerequisite for progress in such areas as alternative development.

(Mr. Juppin de Fondaumière)

6. Regional arrangements were rapidly evolving into a nucleus of action for multilateral drug control. Inter-country arrangements in south-east Asia were becoming a model for the rest of the world. With their specificity and focus, regional organizations had an unequalled potential to play a unifying role in drug control. In view of the need to link national efforts to regional arrangements and incorporate regional efforts into a global framework, the Programme looked forward to further cooperation with regional bodies. The United Nations regional economic commissions and other regional bodies had a tremendous comparative advantage in fostering regional cooperation in drug control under UNDCP leadership.

7. The United Nations system collectively had the capacity to tackle the drug problem on all fronts. Nevertheless, it was essential to ensure that all United Nations agencies allocated an adequate level of resources to that effort. While UNDCP was at the vanguard of the inter-agency effort, it could not be expected to shoulder the entire burden. At the global level, the Programme had made gradual but encouraging progress while working with the World Bank, UNICEF, UNDP, WHO, ILO, FAO, UNESCO and other agencies.

8. United Nations bodies should reflect the drug dimension in their programme activities. Inter-agency efforts in drug control must be fully coordinated with UNDCP. All Governments must raise drug-control concerns in the governing bodies of the other United Nations entities, which was the pivotal element of the inter-agency effort. Despite the broad support for the system-wide effort, comprehensive inter-agency efforts had been slow in reaching the desired level. The need to bridge the gap between principle and practice must be considered at the meetings of governing bodies and other decision-making forums. By placing drug control on the agendas of such gatherings, Member States could take the next step towards developing the system-wide effort in drug control.

9. The Programme's primary objective at the global level was to achieve a balanced approach in which illicit production, consumption and trafficking were all addressed as a single phenomenon. At the current time, that required greater emphasis on demand reduction, particularly in the area of prevention and education. It was very reassuring that Member States fully supported the various strategic orientations devised by the Programme over the past year. UNDCP would step up its efforts to promote action in all areas of priority for Governments and looked forward to enlisting the support of non-governmental organizations, professional and business organizations, the academic world, the mass media, schools and sports movements to that end.

10. Mr. HART (Australia) expressed appreciation for the statement by the representative of UNDCP and hoped that all delegations would give it the attention that it deserved.

AGENDA ITEM 108: RIGHT OF PEOPLES TO SELF-DETERMINATION (continued)

(b) EFFECTIVE REALIZATION OF THE RIGHT OF SELF-DETERMINATION THROUGH AUTONOMY (A/48/147 and Add.1)

11. Mr. ARZOUMANIAN (Armenia) said that the uneasy tension that had emerged between the principles of self-determination and territorial integrity often

(Mr. Arzoumanian, Armenia)

complicated the search for solutions. A balanced and flexible approach should be taken to the implementation of those principles. Many of the current self-determination claims outside the context of decolonization needed an operational framework that could help to determine their legitimacy and levels of realization. Some of those claims had escalated into long-standing conflicts or civil wars that presented a challenge to the international community both in terms of maintaining peace and stability and of the realization of human rights. Preventive measures could help to attain those goals. In that connection, the Liechtenstein initiative put forward in documents A/48/147 and Add.1 was very valuable, especially the important distinction it made between the concepts of "minority" and "community".

12. Realization of the right of self-determination through autonomy was a highly useful concept which could help to reconcile the right to self-determination with the principle of territorial integrity. Though the right to self-determination was a fundamental principle, its realization would require the elaboration of differentiated approaches to concrete self-determination claims, as no single pre-determined solution was suitable for all cases. Consideration could be given to the establishment of an impartial body to look into self-determination claims. Such a body could be instrumental in preventing outbreaks of ethnic conflict and civil strife and facilitating post-conflict confidence-building measures. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Armenia had proposed the transformation of the Trusteeship Council into such a body. Alternatively, a special Security Council committee could be set up to monitor self-determination movements and to alert the Council whenever a specific situation was likely to escalate into a threat to peace. In view of the potential for unsettled self-determination claims to escalate into open conflicts, his delegation would support all initiatives aimed at the creation of either body.

13. Mr. CASTRO (Philippines) said that the framers of the Charter of the United Nations had been very careful in charting the course of dependent peoples towards self-government or independence. While external self-determination was the ideal for all peoples, there might be cases where "peoples", in exercising their right to internal self-determination, had decided to remain within the body politic of which they were an integral part, thus upholding the national sovereignty and territorial integrity of their State. Democratic traditions and structures were an expression of the right to self-determination. The Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights in June 1993 had clearly stated that the right to self-determination should not be construed as authorizing any action which would impair the territorial integrity or political unity of sovereign and independent States. The extent of the autonomy that various groups should enjoy within nation States should be determined by such States within the framework of their national constitution and fundamental laws through democratic and peaceful means. It was in that context that the Philippines viewed the Liechtenstein initiative (A/48/147 and Add.1).

14. The principle of self-determination needed to be studied further in view of its many unforeseen ramifications; the numerous regional conflicts that had erupted since the end of the cold war were largely the result of a confusion in the appreciation of the actual dimensions of the right to internal

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self-determination as opposed to the right to external self-determination. Indeed, in the previous year, his country's Minister for Foreign Affairs had proposed the revision of the United Nations Charter in order to refine further the principles and norms of collective action not only to respond to new situations as perceived by Liechtenstein but also to provide for new contingencies in the forthcoming millennium.

15. Mr. ROSENBERG (Ecuador) said that Ecuador had always been committed to the principle of self-determination for peoples under foreign domination. While the campaign waged by the United Nations on behalf of those peoples was one of the noblest and most satisfying, the scope of the right to self-determination ended with the achievement of decolonization, which was the extent of the Organization's mandate under its Charter. The principle of self-determination could not run counter to the equally inalienable principle of respect for the territorial integrity of States. To violate the latter principle would be to threaten further the already fragile international peace and produce the opposite effect of the Liechtenstein initiative.

16. However, that initiative could be used to improve and implement the concept of governance; it could help to develop methods that would assist Member States in their efforts to bring about the full advancement of the various components of their societies. As many conflicts today stemmed from the frustration of groups within societies, his Government had given increasing decision-making powers to local authorities in order to foster regional development, thereby eliminating such frustrations, and to help the State to adopt mechanisms that addressed the legitimate aspirations of the different communities.

17. While the topic deserved further consideration, it did not fall within the competence of the Third Committee. It related more to the technical cooperation programmes implemented by the operational bodies of the United Nations system such as the United Nations Development Programme, since it related to efforts to restructure States and improve public administration. Should the General Assembly decide to continue consideration of the issue, the best forum would be the Sixth Committee, which might be able to come up with appropriate legal recommendations to satisfy the legitimate concerns of Liechtenstein and of many other Member States.

18. Mr. GAMBARI (Nigeria) said that the question of self-determination must be part of the global effort to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. Initiatives such as self-determination through internal autonomy provided for under the Charter needed the collective consideration and support of the entire international community in order to forestall wars, human suffering and anarchy resulting from the new phenomenon of "failed" nation States incapable of sustaining themselves.

19. However, while the instrument of self-determination had helped to bring down empires and force colonial Governments to be more responsive to the governed, a new, positive role for that right needed to be defined in order to assist democratic development in non-democratic States while strengthening democracy in the democratic ones. Without tolerance between distinct communities, the break-up of existing States would only lead to further schisms

(Mr. Gambari, Nigeria)

and ethnic strife. In order to avoid such chaos, the international community should encourage groups to work out their differences within existing national communities.

20. Realization of the right of self-determination through autonomy was a concept familiar to the experience of his own country with its multitude of ethnic groups, religions, cultures and languages; the federal and local government system in Nigeria had been created with a view to achieving national unity by decentralizing power and promoting tolerance and harmony among the various autonomous communities, thereby safeguarding the rights of minorities in addition. The resulting sense of belonging had helped to maintain peace and facilitate the collective effort in building the nation.

21. His delegation believed that self-determination through autonomy was a credible alternative to the current tendency towards the fragmentation of States, and could be used constructively to encourage the internal and non-violent resolution of conflicts by reforming government structures with the emphasis on achieving greater responsiveness through decentralization. It therefore supported the informal draft resolution being circulated by Liechtenstein, which would warrant more thorough discussion at the forty-ninth session.

22. Mr. TÜRK (Slovenia) said that respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms continued to form the basic criterion for realization of the right to self-determination, the unpredictable consequences of which were often feared. Self-determination, however, was also a source of great hope, and should be judged by its potential rather than by the recent instances of its misuse. While the right of all peoples to self-determination was a basic human right and a fundamental principle of international law, the notion of political status remained undefined; any analysis of claims to self-determination should therefore take into account all the varying factual circumstances of the particular people concerned.

23. While internal self-determination was undoubtedly a successful vehicle for satisfying claims to self-determination, a widely held view was that such claims were internal political matters which should not be pursued at international level. A challenge to that cautious approach was now overdue; as a basic precept under the United Nations Charter, the notion of self-determination should be re-examined to encompass new situations, taking into account the historical and current development of the right to self-determination on the basis of United Nations instruments. In addition, means of introducing social and political change, including autonomy, should be explored with a view to preventing the escalation of tensions into open conflicts which could also threaten international peace and security.

24. The United Nations was faced with the serious challenge of developing appropriate methods of preventive diplomacy to deal with conflicts and avoiding more dangerous and costly methods - such as peacemaking and peace-keeping. The initiative proposed by Liechtenstein (A/48/147 and Add.1) had considerable potential and merited in-depth discussion at the forty-ninth session. His delegation was prepared to participate actively in that process.

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25. Mr. ALI (Iraq) said that, with the end of imperialism, erroneous attempts had been made to reinterpret the principle of the right to self-determination as the right of all ethnic, linguistic and racial groups to rebel or secede from the State, which contravened the spirit of the United Nations Charter and encouraged the fragmentation of States, particularly in the developing countries. With a view to avoiding any escalation of tension and conflict, that right should not be construed in a manner which enabled ethnic minorities to threaten territorial integrity or the political and geographical unity of States in the pursuit of their own narrow interests.

26. The realization of the right to self-determination involved granting political and cultural rights to minorities within one State through open dialogue. As an example, he cited the autonomous region of Iraqi Kurdistan, where legislative and executive power was vested in elected members of the Kurdish community under a pioneering law. The Kurds also enjoyed social and cultural rights; they had Kurdish-language media, while the Kurdish language was a compulsory subject in schools and universities. Despite external and local attempts to thwart the continued progress of its unique experiment, Iraq remained committed to Kurdish autonomy as the means of enabling the Kurdish people of Iraq to achieve its aspirations. Autonomy and the right to self-determination were, however, two separate issues, and any attempt to establish a link between them would be to misconstrue the two concepts.

AGENDA ITEM 109: SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE WORLD SOCIAL SITUATION AND TO YOUTH, AGEING, DISABLED PERSONS AND THE FAMILY (continued) (A/C.3/48/L.7/Rev.1 and L.11)

27. Mr. CASTRO (Philippines), introducing, on behalf of the sponsors, draft resolution A/C.3/48/L.7/Rev.1 on the integration of persons with disabilities into society, announced that Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Iceland, Norway and the Russian Federation had decided to join the sponsors. He informed the Committee that a subparagraph had been added after paragraph 3(c) which read, "Encouraging the activities of the United Nations Children's Fund in promoting prevention and early detection, public awareness and community-based rehabilitation in respect of childhood disability;". That subparagraph would be numbered 3(d), and subparagraphs should be renumbered accordingly.

28. Throughout the world, more than 500 million people suffered from some type of disability. Thus, in most countries, at least 1 out of 10 persons was afflicted by a physical, mental or sensory impairment, and that number increased annually. Thousands had been rendered disabled by natural and man-made disasters, disease, wars and civil strife. The draft resolution was thus of signal importance.

29. The sponsors had found it invidious to try to list all specific causes of disability in the draft resolution, and had decided to treat the issue in a broad, comprehensive manner. The text took note of the various encouraging developments in the areas of disabilities that had taken place since the adoption of General Assembly resolution 47/88. It was the hope of the sponsors that the revised draft resolution would be adopted by consensus.

30. Mr. MAQUIEIRA (Chile), introducing, on behalf of the sponsors, draft resolution A/C.3/48/L.11 on the World Summit for Social Development, announced that the following delegations had joined the list of sponsors: Angola, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Benin, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chad, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cyprus, Egypt, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Honduras, Iceland, Indonesia, Iraq, Jamaica, Madagascar, Mexico, Nicaragua, the Niger, Norway, Papua New Guinea, Poland, Romania, the Russian Federation, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Togo, Tunisia, Viet Nam and Yemen. At the suggestion of several delegations, in paragraph 8 the words "and the relevant regional organizations" had been added following "regional commissions".

31. He said that, firstly, the draft resolution involved procedural matters that had arisen during the organizational session of the Preparatory Committee. Secondly, it called on the General Assembly to take decisions on unresolved issues pending from the Preparatory Committee. The sponsors expected that it would be adopted by consensus.

AGENDA ITEM 110: CRIME PREVENTION AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE (continued) (A/C.3/48/L.8 and L.9)

32. Mrs. PILOTO (Zimbabwe), speaking on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that were members of the Group of African States, introduced draft resolution A/C.3/48/L.8 entitled "United Nations African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders". She emphasized the complex nature of the work of transnational institutions in tackling crime, and said that the draft resolution called on Governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to provide financial and technical support to the Institute.

33. Mr. KUEHL (United States of America) said that his delegation wished to defer introducing draft resolution A/C.3/48/L.9 to a later meeting, at which time it would submit a revised text that took into account the suggestions of various delegations.

The meeting rose at 12.10 p.m.